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## The Discrimination of Literary Sources: Mr. Stallman's Muddles

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IN ORDER that there may be no misunderstanding let me make it clear at once that by *muddles* I mean MUDDLES. Kenneth Muir and I are delighted to welcome an American ally in the crusade against indiscriminate source-hunting that we recently launched in *Essays in Criticism*. And in many respects Mr. Stallman's intentions (see the October *College English*) are excellent. But he really must not be in so much of a hurry to rush to his critical conclusions. *Festina lente*, O camerado.

Consider, for example, that proposition of Mr. Stallman's that "A 'literary source' is necessarily a 'parallelism,' but a parallelism is *not* necessarily a literary source." At a first glance it looks a useful, if not very profound, working distinction. A "parallel" is not quite the same thing as a "source," but for a source to be recognized as a source it must obviously include some parallel elements. But the demon of muddle in Mr. Stallman has impelled him to contradict his own formula in his *very next sentence*—in which he tells us that the literary source of *All for Love* is *Antony and Cleopatra*, "but the derived work is not a parallelism inasmuch as *All for Love*, though it renders the same subject and employs similar imagery, differs altogether from *Anthony and Cleopatra* in its meaning, in its technique, and above all in its very conception." Unless there is

some subtlety here that has escaped me, this is surely about as mad as any of the exchanges at the Mad Hatter's Tea Party. A literary source is necessarily a parallelism—except in the specimen that has all the appearance of being introduced to exemplify the generalisation!

The first victim of these hit-or-miss methods in Mr. Stallman's article is *The Light That Failed*. I shall shed no tears over the rape of that disreputable haridan, but facts are (or ought to be) sacred, and (i) as Dick was standing on the Embankment and not on Westminster Bridge he can hardly be blamed for looking down from it or failing to cross it, (ii) his moment of insight came some considerable time after the scene quoted, (iii) anyhow Kipling was clearly not piling up a series of interlocking symbols so much as sketching in a dramatic "background" for his climax. After that I suppose a lesser Englishman should not complain if he too has been misunderstood or misrepresented. It is not as if there was any malice in Mr. Stallman's muddleheadedness. Moreover some of his examples and illustrations are both interesting and apposite, and we must all be grateful for them. If I do intervene it is only in an attempt to prevent the existing confusion becoming still worse confounded. So much academic research still goes into the investigation of sources and influences that we have almost a profes-

sional obligation, I think, to define what the principles are, if any, that should operate in it.

I had better begin with my 1935 distinction between literary criticism (A is better than B) and literary history (A derives from B). Mr. Stallman seems to have missed the essential point here (I must admit I was not clear about it myself in 1935). The point is that A and B are the same whether we regard them as the objects of a value-judgment (criticism) or a causal analysis (history). Whichever I say, "Pope is better than Dryden" or "Pope derives from Dryden," the two units of human experience that I am appealing to remain the same. In both cases the objects of the relationship are my total aesthetic responses to the poetic works of Pope, on the one hand, and of Dryden, on the other. It was on the basis of this general principle—which Mr. Stallman can hardly contest—that I proposed in a recent note in *Essays in Criticism* a threefold distinction: (a) the extra-literary source (which I called the "plagiarism-source"); (b) the literary source with minimal aesthetic significance (my "coincidence-source"); (c) the significant and relevant literary source, which alone qualifies as literary history (my "convention-source").

As an intriguing example of the extra-literary source I cited the passage in A. C. Benson's book on FitzGerald that T. S. Eliot used in "Gerontion." (I did not claim to be the discoverer of this tit-bit, but I was not aware of John Abbot Clark's article on it.) In this case there can be no doubt about the *fact* of a derivation. A does derive from B. But here A is not the reader's total response to Eliot's two lines within the context of the poem, but a number of words and phrases that can be seen, when the passage is examined in cold blood, to repeat the same words and phrases on a particular page in Benson's book. The source is extra-literary because its discovery adds nothing whatever to the meaning of Eliot's lines,

if they are regarded as part of a work of literature. If anything, indeed, the reader is likely to find an awareness of this particular source so distracting that he will probably do his best to exclude it from his mind when he returns to the poem. I call this type of source a "plagiarism-source" (*plagiarius* = kidnapper), because a charge of plagiarism imputes its stigma to the poet and not to the poem. The "Ode to the Cuckoo" is just as good, or bad, a poem whether Michael Bruce wrote it or John Logan. As far as the reader is concerned the best test of the presence of a "plagiarism-source" (as distinguished from the other types) is the degree to which its revelation disconcerts him. The innocent reader of *Tristram Shandy* cannot but be disconcerted, I think, when he learns how much of the text Sterne appropriated bodily from Burton. And the reader of *John Inglesant* is likely to feel a similar discomfort when he starts comparing Shorthouse's account of Oxford during its siege in the Civil War with Lady Fanshawe's *Memoirs*. They are so obviously mere labour-saving devices. But the literary objection to plagiarism is not so much the doubtful morals its detection reveals in the writer practising it as the diversion it introduces for the reader from what is being said to the writer's private life. It is anti-literary, therefore, as well as non-literary. The rules for its detection are more likely to be found at Scotland Yard than in the *Poetics* or *An Essay on Criticism*.

In spite, therefore, of Mr. Stallman's scepticism about "plagiarism-sources" I still feel that their recognition as a separate category is a useful distinction. As far as the serious study of literature is concerned they seem to me a dead-end, an unrewarding irrelevance. No doubt the discovery of such misdemeanours as Eliot's—there is also the curious business of the Sherlock Holmes plagiarism in *Murder in the Cathedral* (see Grover Smith, *Notes and Queries*, 2 Oct. 1948, pp. 431-432)—adds to the gaiety of

academic life, but do not let us mistake the literary criminologist for either a literary critic or a literary historian. If I may recur to my original formula, this breed of source-hunter has not got as far as A and B. Like the bibliographer, the concordance-compiler, the Record Office-burrower, and the collectors of variant readings his activities are pre-literary. At best he has added one more crumb to that mountain of disconnected "facts" of which the literary critic and historian need to be aware, though not too aware, if they are to carry out their own duties successfully. Occasionally even a "plagiarism-source" may turn out to throw literary rather than merely biographical light on the guilty passage. This is especially the case in autobiographical or quasi-autobiographical poetry. The first two lines of "Gerontion" can be used once more to illustrate my point. Mr. Stallman seems to agree with me that the discovery of this source does not help the reader to a better understanding of the poem, though he is able, apparently, to shut out the irrelevant associations that FitzGerald and A. C. Benson introduce for me—perhaps because he is not very familiar with their writings (he consistently mis-spells FitzGerald's name). But it *might* be possible nevertheless to turn the plagiarism to indirect literary use. Eliot has told us (in *The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism*) that it was a reading of the *Omar* "at the age of fourteen or so" that opened the world of poetry to him.<sup>1</sup> "It was like a sudden conversion; the world appeared anew, painted with bright, delicious and painful colours." Might not "Gerontion" therefore be a FitzGerald-Omar Khayyám deposit, a composite memory of those early ecstasies? Would it

not be natural for Eliot to read and remember a biography of the author of the ecstasies, the words of which would thus acquire a secondary sanctity? Alas, it is unlikely. Eliot was fourteen in 1902, and Benson's book was not published until 1905. It seems that the plagiarism *was* only a labour-saving device.

To return to a discrimination of sources. At one end of our scale, then, is the "plagiarism-source." The tracking down of this type of source should be left, I suggest, to the literary detectives. Its establishment adds little or nothing to even the most conscientious reader's understanding or appreciation of the literary work in which it has been located, and usually tends, if anything to disconcert him. The author's motive in using the source is essentially extra-literary—to save himself time and trouble.

At the other end of our scale comes the "coincidence-source." I devised the term—Mr. Stallman has again missed the point—to rub in the fact that in the case of this type of source it makes no *literary* difference (from the point of view of the reader's aesthetic experience) whether the author has actually utilized the particular source proposed or not. The resemblance may be completely accidental—or it may not be. But the elaborate process of demonstration that is required to turn a "parallel" into a "source" is generally so much wasted labour because it makes next to no difference either way. As an example in my note in *Essays in Criticism* I offered William Browne's "Let no bird sing!" which may conceivably have suggested Keats's "And no birds sing" in "La Belle Dame sans Merci." It makes no significant difference, as far as I can see, one way or the other whether Keats did or did not borrow the line. Even de Selincourt, who accepted it as a case of genuine reminiscence, adds that "the essential difference in the genius of the two poets could hardly be realised better than in a comparison of the use to which each of them puts this simple

<sup>1</sup> A sentence in Eliot's review of J. W. Cunliffe's *English Literature during the Last Half-Century* in *The Athenaeum* (27 June 1919) seems to confirm his age at the time of this "conversion": "The mind of a boy of fourteen may be decaden by Shakespeare, and may burst into life on collision with Omar or the Blessed Damozel."

phrase" (*The Poems of John Keats*, London, 1905, p. 527)—a comment which does almost amount to what can be called B-in-both logic. "From the point of view of the poem's meaning," as I put it in my note, "these similarities are coincidences rather than causes." But it would not disconcert the reader of Keats if it should ever be proved beyond the possibility of doubt that he *had* borrowed his line from Browne. This is because the image is a mere commonplace, which Keats has made his own by revivifying it through the new and appropriate context in which he has inserted it. It is what happens every time an English poet uses an English word. The word is not his creation, it comes from the common stock of the language, and the source from which the poet originally obtained the word—whether it was at his mother's knee or in a lesson at school—is almost always poetically irrelevant.

A "coincidence-source" is the opposite of a "plagiarism-source" because it is too public, whereas the latter is too private, to be of literary significance. The former points to an unconscious or only half-conscious act by the writer; the absence of acknowledgement is either a matter of unawareness that any borrowing has taken place, or of the feeling that the debt is so trivial that it would be mere pedantry to do anything about it. The latter is essentially secretive, and the decision to make the concealment is conscious and deliberate. Both types belong to biography rather than literary history, and their occasional contributions to it, e.g., in establishing a date, tend to be indirect and accidental. At best a "coincidence-source" will tell us something about a writer's reading habits, and it may also provide evidence for the psychologist who is investigating the processes of literary composition. Its classic example, of course, is that white elephant of criticism *The Road to Xanadu*, a book that is a masterpiece in its own way but that leads the literary reader of Coleridge's two

poems exactly nowhere.

What then is left? Here Mr. Stallman and I may not be so far apart. "The critical question," he writes, "is whether the derived convention, the verbal echo, the borrowed parallel, etc., has been transformed so that what has been borrowed is now integrated anew." If he means, as I suppose he must, that the use of this or that source-material has resulted in the creation of something of literary significance that would not have been created unless it had been used, I am happy to say "Amen." But what is the condition that the source must satisfy for such an amalgam to be possible? Mr. Stallman's formula "A has its parallel in B" is no help because "plagiarism-sources" and "coincidence-sources" are clearly capable of inclusion in it. Instead therefore of his term "parallelism" I prefer to use the term "convention-source." My label puts the emphasis in what is surely the right place. A work of literature can be said, I suppose, to make a statement of general human significance through, or by the use of, certain particular conventions—linguistic, metrical, rhetorical, in addition to conventions of *genre* and general treatment or attitude. As far as the "general human significance" goes, I doubt if the source-hunter can contribute much. But in the "convention-source"—i.e., the source in which a verbal resemblance includes or points to an identity or similarity in the convention employed—the literary historian possesses a valuable aid to interpretation. It is of the first importance that the reader should recognize as soon as possible what the dominant conventions are in whatever he is reading, if it is only that he may realize when and to what extent they are being abandoned or defied. For the crucial question is often not the resemblance between two uses of a single convention but their differences. Even Shakespeare's sources generally only acquire a truly literary interest at the points where he diverges from them. I take it that this is what Mr.

Stallman means when he says there must be transformation and reintegration of whatever is borrowed.<sup>2</sup>

An alternative approach to the discrimination of sources might be via the old classical theory of *imitatio*. It will be remembered that the theory, while encouraging imitation, insisted that it was not enough and required that "individual originality be shown by choosing and using models carefully, by reinterpreting

<sup>2</sup> A convention includes the choice of the appropriate subject-matter. Mr. Stallman treats Conrad's experiences in the Congo as a "non-literary" source of the "Heart of Darkness," but this seems to me an unnecessary concession. In so far as a knowledge of Conrad's Congo Diary assists the reader to react appropriately to the story, that knowledge must be accepted as part of its total literary meaning. In any case the travel-story, or the fictions based upon the facts of an author's own travels, is one of the best-established of all literary *genres*.

borrowed matter, and by improving on those models and that matter." I have been quoting the excellent summary of the classical doctrine by H. O. White (*Plagiarism and Imitation during the English Renaissance*, Cambridge, Mass., 1935, p. 18), who shows that it was also accepted, with minor variations, by almost all the Italian, French and English critics of the Renaissance. The relationship between a model and its ideal imitator was essentially that of a "convention-source" to the writer employing it. On the other hand, the imitator who was merely imitative or who imitated the wrong models offended against literary decorum by an attitude similar to that to a "coincidence-source." As for the "plagiarism-source," Mr. White adds that "piracy, and imitation marred by secrecy . . . receive short shrift." Exactly.

### Boswell: A Rejoinder

Not Fortune's wheel but family's pride  
Kept Jamie hid at Malahide  
In Ebony Cabinet, croquet box—  
As if he were a moral pox.

No nincompoop in glory he:  
A Rake who cornered History  
And held her down until the times  
Approved his rape, forgave his crimes.

No snobbish fool, but canny Scot  
Predestined to escape the plot  
Of incidental Johnson fame,  
He knew he was of The Elect—  
This libertine auld laird Auchinleck.

WILLIAM GOING

# A New, Probable Source for "Kubla Khan"

GARLAND H. CANNON

SIR WILLIAM JONES (1746-1794) was a pioneer in Oriental scholarship, spending eleven years in India as a Supreme Court judge. While there he built his reputation, which was already one of the brightest of the eighteenth century, into one of the most brilliant and phenomenal that the Western world has ever seen, chiefly through essays based on his amazing knowledge of Hindu and Mohammedan culture and through superb translations of Sanskrit literature. His translation of *The Ordinances of Manu*, that ancient system of Hindu religious and civil duties, is still unsurpassed; and his translation of Kalidasa's *Sakuntala* revealed to the West and the Indian people themselves that in Sanskrit there was a forgotten age of drama rivaling that of the time of Shakespeare and Jonson. In spare moments from his rigorous study schedule, he composed a series of nine hymns, or odes, to some of the Hindu divinities. These compositions, as well as his other original writings and translations, had considerable influence on such Romantics as Byron, Shelley, Moore, Southey, and Landor, having a major role in stimulating the Oriental strain of Romanticism. One has only to glance at these writers' footnotes to ascertain the extent to which Jones provided Oriental local color for the succeeding generation of English poets.

Jones's first six hymns were published in 1785-1786 in *The Asiatick Miscellany*, a Calcutta quarterly. This was widely circulated and praised throughout Europe, where compliments were mainly reserved for Jones's hymns. In the first volume, of 1785, there were hymns to the mythological Kama (Love), Narayana (Supreme Being), Sarasvati (Brahma's

wife), and Ganga (Siva's daughter); in the second (and last), to Indra (King of Immortals) and Surya (Sun). The remaining three hymns were written later. "A Hymn to Ganga" is particularly interesting in that there are numerous similarities in language and idea with those in "Kubla Kahn," so many, in fact, that one is led to wonder whether this ode might not be a source for Coleridge's poem. If the stimulus was unconscious and became a part of the general inspiration for "Kubla Khan" which has been described so ingeniously by Professor Lowes in *The Road to Xanadu*, then this paper is merely another supplement to Lowes. On the other hand, if Coleridge was conscious of his use of Jones's poem and yet did not admit this influence in his famous "opium-note" of 1816, then his whole explanation of the origin of "Kubla Khan" would seem to be exploded.

"Kubla Khan" was written at some time between 1797 and 1800, at least twelve years after the appearance of "A Hymn to Ganga" in *The Asiatick Miscellany*. Unfortunately there is not even a semi-complete list of Coleridge's reading, and probably will never be because of the omnivorousness of his reading habits. There is no reason to believe, however, that he did not see this periodical, if only because of the wide circulation and popularity that it enjoyed in England beginning in the late 1780's. He was early interested in Orientalism, and certainly Sir William Jones was the greatest scholar and poet in that field at the time.

Coleridge seems to have been introduced to the Brahmanic code by Jones's translation of *The Ordinances of Manu*, for he entered the title in his Notebook for 1795-1798. This entry may have been

only his reminder to himself to read Jones's famous translation, but the understanding and appreciation of the code that he showed in a letter to John Thelwall (16 Oct. 1797) strongly indicate that he read the translation:

at other times I adopt the Brahmin Creed, and say, 'It is better to sit than to stand, it is better to lie than to sit, it is better to sleep than to wake, but Death is the best of all!' I should much wish, like the Indian Vishnu, to float about along an infinite ocean cradled in the flower of the Lotus, and wake once in a million years for a few years more. I have put this feeling in the mouth of Alhadra, my Moorish woman [in *Osorio*].

Interestingly enough, Coleridge included plans in his Notebook for hymns to the Sun, the Moon, and each of the four Elements, much in the way that Jones had earlier planned and written a similar series of hymns to the sun and some of the elements according to the Hindu conception of them,

Coleridge's most significant direct connection with Jones was not revealed until long after he had rejected the Brahmanic code as atheistical. In his unfinished "Opus Maximum," on which he worked for at least twenty years, there is a fascinating passage:

It would be more than we are entitled to expect of the human mind, if Sir W. Jones, Mr. Wilkins, etc., great and good as we know them to have been, had not overrated the merit of works, the power of understanding which is of such rare occurrence, and so difficultly attained. In the present instance there is an additional excuse; an excuse which more than acquits the judges, though it cannot prevent the reversal of their decision; for to the writings in question all the notions, images, and feelings, which are best calculated to excite that obscure awe, that lies midway between religion and superstition, hang and encluster. Their undoubted antiquity is so great, and the antiquity claimed for them at once so daring and visionary that we might almost say '*liber ipse superstat*,' the book itself walks like a ghost of a departed world.

There is a superstition involved in a survival so contrary to the ordinary experience of mankind. I have myself paid this debt of homage on my first presentation to these foreign potentates by aid of the great linguists above mentioned. But having so done, I sought to purge the sight with the euphrasy of common sense, and took a second and more leisurely view before I put the question to myself, 'And what then have I seen?'

'What are

These Potentates of inmost Ind?'

Shall I confess the truth? Their next neighbour of the North, the temple-throned infant of Thibet, with the Himala behind and the cradle of the Ganges at his feet, conveys to my mind an impressive likeness, seems to me a pregnant symbol of the whole Brahman Theosophy. Without growth, without production! Abstract the enormous shapes and phantasms, the Himala, the Ganges of the fancy, and what remains? a baby! [Quoted in Muirhead, *Coleridge as Philosopher*, pp. 283-284]

Since Orientalist Charles Wilkins, who is listed alongside Jones in the passage, wrote with more of a linguistic view toward India and since Jones gave information on "the Ganges of the fancy" only in "A Hymn to Ganga," it can be assumed that Coleridge learned of the foreign potentate Ganga from the hymn. This, then, is his most direct connection with the hymn, apparently admitted by Coleridge himself.

Specifically, what are the probable influences that the hymn exerted on Coleridge? Certainly the vocabulary of "Kubla Khan" is very like that of the hymn, so that if one could rearrange Coleridge's word-order and triple the length of the poem, the result would be a hymn to Alph (or Ganges, if the name of the river were altered). The very number of words common to both poems and the use of these words in the same sense have a cumulative effect on the reader, points which cannot be casually dismissed as the coincidence of a diction common to eighteenth-century Orientalism in Eng-

lish poetry. But one should consider the six major similarities between the poems in detail.

(1) A sacred river traversing an identified Asiatic area provides the central unity in each poem. Each is holy, a *first* river. The Ganges is directly or indirectly the subject of every line; the Alpheus, of ll. 3-36. The tone and mood of each poem are chiefly developed from the description of the river, imparting a quality of Eastern sensuousness and exoticism. The origin, course, objective, and destination of each river are parallel. Ganga springs radiantly from Siva's brow, whereas in Coleridge a mighty fountain momentarily springs up from deep within the earth to form the sacred river Alph, which Coleridge moved from Greece to China. Of divine origin and at an altitude so elevated that there is ice, each river is possessed of a savage, wild motion early in its course. Then there is a calmer, soothing flow, nourishing the plain into an abundant greenness and fertility. Each more or less portrays a lover, gaining its amorous objective shortly before flowing into the ocean. Ganga mingles herself with Brahmaputra; in the Greek legend of Alpheus, which Coleridge does not develop but which the reader cannot avoid considering, Alpheus is eventually able to mingle his waters with the fountain which Arethusa had become in order to escape him.

Coleridge is not as geographically precise as Jones, and in this respect his is the more universal poem and in all respects the superior literary accomplishment. Yet one is unlikely to mistake the Chinese city of Shangtu, or Xanadu, to which Alph has been transplanted, or the Abyssinian maid (Ethiopia was the traditional source of slave girls) who sings of Mount Abora, which is probably a reference to the wild Abor Hills, which rim the frontier between India and China. If the image of the Abyssinian maid is extended, it can be surmised that on her way to Shangtu she may have been trans-

ported through this area inhabited by Abor tribesmen, warriors so fierce and barbaric that not even Kubla Khan, the greatest of the Mongols, could conquer them (or the British with modern weapons, centuries later). Unhappy in the hands of her uncultured Mongol lord, she sings not of her homeland but of Mount Abora, conceivably a symbol of freedom to her at a time when Kubla Khan's empire was so vast that he had to divide it into four gigantic kingdoms under separate khans. Perhaps her caravan had even been attacked by the Abors. In "A Hymn to Ganga," on the other hand, the geographical course of the Ganges can be followed on an eighteenth-century map of India with some facility.

But if the maid's singing of Mount Abora rather than of her Abyssinian "paradise" can thus be hypothetically justified, why should Coleridge have chosen this name which connotes all the exotic spice of the Orient? What reason had he to consult the standard geographers of Asia of the time—Major James Rennell, Barthélemy d'Herbelot, and Jean d'Anville, sources which Jones himself used—and in the process uncover such a minute drop of local color? Even on modern maps the Abor Hills are not easy to locate without orientation from an index.

The answer may possibly be found in the first sentence of Jones's prose Argument accompanying "A Hymn to Ganga": "This poem would be rather obscure without geographical notes; but a short introductory explanation will supply the place of them, and give less interruption to the reader." Here was a matter of highly specific geographical information which not even Coleridge's immense knowledge could supply without consulting Rennell and other Asiatic geographers, to whom he referred in his Notebook for 1795-1798, for Jones supplied the description of the routes followed by the Ganges and Brahmaputra but no map.

Following Jones's explanation by means

of a map of India, Coleridge would find the main source of the Ganges to be the Bhagirathi, which issues from an ice cave high in the Himalayas. While tracing the course of the Ganges to its juncture with the Brahmaputra, he could not overlook the range of jagged mountains just to the north of the Brahmaputra, the Abor Hills. If he read further on the subject, he would have learned that the Hills are covered by thick forests and are slashed through by torrential rivers that sweep down the jagged gorges, and that the fierce tribes living in the region are called *Abor*, an Assamese word meaning barbarous or untamed. Except to orientate himself geographically for an intelligent reading of "A Hymn to Ganga," there would seem to be no possible reason why Coleridge might have studied an Indian map so minutely; there is no other explanation for the fact that he wrote *Mount Abora* in his final draft of "Kubla Khan."

Alice Snyder has pointed out (*TLS*, 2 Aug. 1934, p. 541) that the original expression in the "Kubla Khan" manuscript was *Mount Amara*, which was crossed out and replaced by *Abora*. As Lane Cooper observed, Purchas used the word *Amara*, followed by Milton. Certainly "Kubla Khan" begins with Purchas' lines; it is logical that Coleridge would have first written the striking name *Amara* he had found in Purchas. But then he remembered a better name, one which was actually "incense-bearing" and which was genuine geography. It is extremely doubtful that he would have returned to Jones's Argument and a map of India solely to search for a more Oriental place name to replace *Amara*. The likelihood is that he had casually seen the name *Abor* on the map when first reading the Argument and hymn. Later, he happened to recall the name, inserting it for *Amara*. In any case, the term *Mount Abora* indirectly represents strong proof of the influence of "A Hymn to Ganga" on "Kubla Khan."

(2) Like the hymn, "Kubla Khan" has no real plot. There are no narrative episodes, though the ancestral voices that prophesy war and the damsel with a dulcimer intimate the possibility of narrative action. The poem is unified only by Alph and inextricably woven Oriental imagery. In the hymn there are colored vignettes of Indian landscape, but these are unified primarily because each is an Indian setting through which the Ganges passes. It is true that Jones is eulogizing Ganga and is describing her origin, course, and destination, with the "climax" of the poem to be her marriage with the "heav'nly boy" Brahmaputra, son of Brahma, just as the climax of the Greek legend more or less occurs when the river Alpheus mingles with the fountain Arethusa. But except for narrative sketches here and there, Jones's hymn has no real plot. The point of view is omniscient until late in the poem, when the Brahman poet—Jones pretended that a Brahman had written the hymn—enters as a first-person observer to address Ganga. Likewise, Coleridge begins with the third person and concludes with the poet's intensely subjective, first-person observation of the vision.

(3) Each poem ends on a note of frustration. The Brahman poet, in the first person, pleads for newly married Ganga's mercy toward the English and then concludes with a prayer for the English in India and for an end to the "terror" of English "martial grace" in India. When one recalls the troubled political situation there in the late eighteenth century, it is evident that the Brahman hopes rather than expects, that he fears rather than anticipates. This note of frustration is echoed in "Kubla Khan" by the poet, who, in the first person, desires (presumably in vain) to revive within himself the Abyssinian maid's heavenly playing and singing. He will probably not succeed, just as the Brahman poet will not live to see his prayer fulfilled.

(4) A pronounced contrast in "Kubla

Khan" echoes one in the hymn. Coleridge juxtaposes a "sunny pleasure-dome" with "caves of ice" in the midst of Oriental tropics. In the hymn, "Sonorous rivers, bright though deep" flow from "Himola's perennial snow" into "thirsty deserts"; it is a "diamond cave" (from the reflection of the ice) rather than "caves of ice."

(5) The prophecy-proclamation of war, heavenly song, and love-sick woman in "Kubla Khan" echo similar ideas in the hymn. Alpha reached the caverns

And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:  
And 'mid this tumult Kubla heard from far  
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

There are two prophecies of war in the hymn, one in a similar sequence of thought:

Nor stop, where RAMA, bright from dire  
alarms,  
Sinks in chaste *Sita's* constant arms,  
While bards his wars and truths proclaim.

Simultaneously while the River Rama noisily *sinks* (even the verb is the same, though Coleridge used the past tense) into the passive, unmoving waters of Sita, there is heard a proclamation, or prophecy, of war. When one recalls the character of Kubla Khan, it must be assumed that Coleridge's "ancestral voices" are as poetical and impressive. Jones's Brahman makes a second prophecy: "So shall his frantick sons with discord rend his throne, / And his fair-smiling realms be sway'd by nations yet unknown." The "war" prophesied by the ancestral voices in "Kubla Khan" was to culminate in the ultimate destruction of the Mongol empire Kubla Khan had extended to its height. In the hymn, the "ruffian king" Aurungzebe, the last and most powerful of the Mogul emperors of India, who took the title of Conqueror of the World (Kubla Khan *was*, perhaps, the conqueror of the world and certainly the last of the really powerful khans) has ordered the shrines in his empire destroyed. The Brahman poet prophesies that Aurungzebe's sons, like the remote descendants of

Kubla Khan, will lead his empire into dissolution at the hands of new nations.

These two prophecies, particularly the first mentioned, are closer in thought and vocabulary to "Kubla Khan" than any other lines in the hymn, most of the other similarities being persuasive mainly by virtue of their number. Two others are relatively strong. In the hymn, Brahmins sing "the lofty *Veda*" as raptly as the Abyssinian maid sings of Mount Abora. Love-sick Ganga "seeks her destin'd lord, and pours her mighty soul" out for her "river-god," darting toward him "not as earth-born lovers toy," whereas Coleridge's love-sick woman is "wailing for her demon-lover." The other-worldliness of the lovers in each poem is explicit.

(6) Finally, there is a kinship in imagery between the two poems, not only in the like expressions in that imagery, but also in the pictorial and sensual qualities of the scenes which are being described, particularly those images which describe the sacred river and the land bounding it. For example, some of the happiest images describe Alph's origin: And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil seething,  
As if this earth in fast thick pants were breathing,  
A mighty fountain momentarily was forced:  
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst  
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,  
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:  
And 'mid these dancing rocks at once and ever

It flung up momentarily the sacred river.

Several expressions from "A Hymn to Ganga" are used in the same context and bear a cumulative resemblance to the passage in "Kubla Khan" when rearranged to approximate Coleridge's progression of thought:

And from her sacred mansion gush'd /  
... How full, how strong  
Her trembling panting surges run /  
GANGA from his brow by heav'nly fingers  
press'd  
Sprang radiant /

There from a fiery cave the bubbling crystal flows /

... and pours her mighty soul /  
And hurls her azure stream amain /  
Broad *Gogra*, rushing swift from northern hills /

*Sona*, with pellucid wave  
Dancing from her diamond cave /  
Wild *Brahmaputra* winding flows /  
... flung from shining tresses.

Once Alph has emerged onto the surface, there are "fertile ground" and "gardens bright with sinuous rills," suggestive of "fertile plains" and "Sonorous rivers, bright though deep, / O'er thirsty deserts youth and freshness throw." The "sunny spots of greenery" and "forests ancient as the hills" remind one of the "labyrinth green . . . by moonlight" and "perpetual verdure" created by the Ganges. The gardens "where blossomed many an incense-bearing tree" bring to mind "forests bloom" and "Gay *Rangamara*, where sweetest spikenard blooms, / And *Siret*, fam'd for strong perfumes." Coleridge's gardens might be "groves of nard" or any of the numerous vales and dales described in the hymn.

The eventual merging of Alph with the ocean provides additional similarity:

Then reached the caverns measureless to man,

And sank in tumult to a lifeless ocean:  
And 'mid this tumult *Kubla* heard from far  
Ancestral voices prophesying war!

The shadow of the dome of pleasure  
Floated midway on the waves;  
Where was heard the mingled measure  
From the fountain and the caves.

When *Ganga* sees her destined husband she "rushes with tumultuous joy." *Ganga* "descending grac'd the caverns of the west." There are "mingling tides" instead of a "mingled measure" when rivers join. *Ganga*'s union with *Brahmaputra* affords an additional resemblance: "But blending her fierce waves, and teeming verdant isles; / While buxom *Lacshmi* crowns their bed, and sounding ocean smiles"; presumably the same situation prevails

when *Alpheus* is at last joined with *Arethusa*, possibly depicted in the quoted passage as "the fountain." Instead of a shadow that "Floated midway on the waves," one finds sails which "On thy jasper bosom float."

There is no "pleasure-dome" in the hymn (although the word *dome* is), that expression in "*Kubla Khan*" coming from *Purchas*. Certainly the first two lines of the poem came from *Purchas*, though "The charms of *GANGA*, through all worlds proclaim'd" distantly parallels the idea of *decreeing* the dome of pleasure. Coleridge's "walls and towers" is not too removed from "domes and turrets"; but his whole sentence, "walls and towers were girdled round: / And there were gardens bright with sinuous rills," has a much stronger kinship with "on her banks divine / Sees temples, groves, and glitt'ring tow'rs, that in her crystal shine." Coleridge's concluding lines on "floating hair" and nectar, "For he on honey-dew hath fed, / And drunk the milk of Paradise," have a slight resemblance to "nectar-dropping locks" and "pilgrims on the farsought bank drink nectar, as it glides" (i.e., they drink from the sacred river). Then there are several isolated expressions, too tenuous to stand as evidence in themselves, which when added to those similarities already demonstrated, further strengthen the case: "dancing rocks" and "unholy rocks"; "holy and enchanted" place and "enchanted mount"; "a waning moon" and "a beamy moon"; *girdled* and *girds* (in the verb sense of *girdles*); "sinuous rills" and "malignant rills"; *wailing* and *wailings*; and "close your eyes with holy dread" and "Nor frown, dread Goddess."

Among the many similarities in syntax there are two which might be listed. The exclamatory opening of "But Oh!" resembles Jones's "Yet ah!" Coleridge's powerful repetition, "Beware! Beware," brings to mind "Cease, oh! cease."

In summary, the evidence that Coleridge knew Jones's writings consists of

two parts: (1) his admitted acquaintance with Jones's translation of *The Ordinances of Manu*, the title being listed in his Notebook for 1795-98 and the acquaintance apparently being substantiated by his understanding and appreciation of the Brahmanic code as demonstrated in his letter to John Thelwall and Alhadra's soliloquy in *Osorio*; and (2) his references to Jones and "the Ganges of the fancy" in "Opus Maximum," proving his acquaintance with "A Hymn to Ganga" almost conclusively. His use of the hymn seems to be mainly substantiated by its numerous resemblances to "Kubla Khan" in subject matter, imagery, and vocabulary, particularly the war-prophecy and the use of the word *Abora* from *Abor Hills*. Intangibly enough, these accumulate into an even stronger resemblance, one of tone, for Coleridge seems to have achieved the same tone or feeling in "Kubla Khan" which Jones had created at least twelve years previously in "A Hymn to Ganga," making it difficult for one to believe that the hymn did not influence Coleridge to some degree.

The poem either did not impress him sufficiently for him to refer to it in his correspondence, a circumstance that would indicate his *unconscious* interweaving of certain ideas and details from it into his famous "dream"; or else it stimulated him directly, so that he associated aspects from it with points from Purchas and still other points from his reading and composed "Kubla Khan" soon thereafter. The latter explanation presupposes that there never was any dream (an idea which has been advanced by Professors N. B. Allen, Elizabeth Schneider, and others), and that Coleridge's note of 1816 was an intentional

hoax to conceal his compression and reweaving of materials from Jones's 169-line hymn and other sources into a "fragment" introduced by two lines admittedly borrowed from Purchas.

It is not asserted here that "A Hymn to Ganga" was the only source for "Kubla Khan." It is asserted that the hymn was a probable source and that John Livingston Lowes, in *The Road to Xanadu*, overlooked Jones's poem in trying to explore Coleridge's immense reading-list. There are too many similarities to dismiss them as mere coincidences, and the scholar who is trained in proving possible literary sources to be facts instead of speculations should not overlook "A Hymn to Ganga" when considering "Kubla Khan" (Coleridge thus joins the other Romantics who were influenced by Jones). It may be that the cumulative weight of similarities between the two poems may incite the scholar to ferret out those which have barely been touched on here—the like sensuousness and syntax of the poems.

If the influence of the hymn can be proved, then Coleridge's "vision in a dream" will be exploded. His "explanation" must then be recognized as a hoax which has long misled those who trust the words of a Romantic poet about the composition of a Romantic poem. Even if the only dogmatic proof of Jones's influence on "Kubla Khan" has been forever lost in the intervening century and a half—i.e., Coleridge's own admission of the influence, which he possibly never set down on paper anyway—the scholar who is convinced of this influence is still left standing on many interesting parallels between the two poems, truly "twice five miles of fertile ground."

# Idea and Method in a Scene by Dostoevsky

RICHARD M. EASTMAN

CUSTOM tends to select a particular passage from the works of every great writer through which most readers will see, for the first time, the unique world of that author's imagination. For Dostoevsky, so commonly represented in popular editions and in fiction courses by *Crime and Punishment*, the second chapter of that novel has come to serve as such a "window." A careful study of what it reveals can do much to prepare one for Dostoevsky's fiction as a whole.

The chapter goes as follows. The student Raskolnikov has stopped at a tavern, nervously exhausted after "rehearsing" his projected murder of a socially useless old pawnbroker-woman. He is accosted by a drunkard named Marmeladov, a stranger. For a dozen pages he listens to Marmeladov's gratuitous confession of sin. Then he escorts Marmeladov home, where he finds the drunkard's family living in abject misery. Raskolnikov leaves a few coins for them and comes away.

On the surface, the Marmeladov episode liberally violates whatever notions of narrative efficiency the reader may have brought from such Anglo-Saxon classics as *Great Expectations*, *Henry Esmond*, or *The Scarlet Letter*. Marmeladov is a subordinate character. He has little to do, directly, with the main story of Raskolnikov's crime and expiation. Yet Dostoevsky has no sooner opened his novel than he gives his minor actor a monologue of fantastic length: prolix, morbid, and unrealistic on several counts. One who loses Dostoevsky at this point will certainly not regain him in the many other episodes which share, in one way or another, the same qualities: Katerina Ivanovna's funeral dinner, the massive interrogations of Raskolnikov by the dis-

trict attorney Porfiry, the "Grand Inquisitor" sequence of *The Brothers Karamazov*, and so on. Since his greatest puzzle will be to distinguish a structural principle in such extended passages, an analysis ought first of all to consider internal arrangement.

Marmeladov opens his conversation with Raskolnikov by a rambling overture which recapitulates more or less realistically the jumble of impulses and memories under which he suffers at the end of a five-day drunk. The overture gives way to an autobiography, the distinct divisions of which are numbered below.

(1) Marmeladov portrays the integrative forces of his second marriage. Compassion led him to marry a gentlewoman in straits (Katerina Ivanovna). Humanity induced him to make as good a husband for her as he could.

(2) Abruptly he comes to his descent into drink. Now, with equal intensity, Marmeladov paints the depths to which he sank. He lost his position. His family has come to live in squalor. The children go hungry for days on end. A painful irony darkens the account as Marmeladov stops to pay tribute to the generosity and sufferings of those whom he has betrayed for drink. Then he arrives at the prostitution of his daughter Sonia. Before his eyes the alternatives had been debated, the desperate stepmother had urged the affirmative, Sonia had returned with her thirty roubles and lain next the wall. "And then I saw," Marmeladov tells Raskolnikov, "young man, I saw Katerina Ivanovna, in the same silence go up to Sonia's little bed; she was on her knees all the evening kissing Sonia's feet, and would not get up, and then they both fell asleep in each other's arms . . . together,

together . . . yes . . . and I . . . lay drunk."

The reversal of direction between parts 1 and 2 is characteristic; the principle determines the arrangement of the remainder of the confession as well. Marmeladov, for instance, has just been seen at his presumable, irrevocable lowest. Precisely at such a moment, when the reader is persuaded that he has received the ultimate impression of a scene, Dostoevsky will shatter the impression with a sentence, to begin in a new direction.

(3) Marmeladov tells how his life miraculously mended. "Then I got up in the morning, put on my rags, lifted up my hands to heaven and set off." He got back his position. Katerina Ivanovna began to fuss over him, a new outfit was bought, the children were hushed when he rested, special dishes were cooked for him, he was bragged about to the landlady, he was called ludicrous pet names.

(4) This idyll is blotted out by Marmeladov's account of his awful relapse. He has stolen the remainder of his earnings, he has drunk for five days, the job is gone, the new clothing is bartered away. As a last device, he has gone to cadge drinking-money from his prostitute daughter, an act over which he has the sublime temerity to attempt laughing.

(5) The reader who feels that he has now seen into the depth's of Marmeladov's soul has in fact seen only the inner abasement. At once, in response to the scornful question, "What are you to be pitied for?" Marmeladov rises to a vision of salvation for drunkards:

"You too come forth," He will say. "Come forth, ye drunkards, come forth, ye weak ones, come forth, ye children of shame!" And we shall all come forth, without shame and shall stand before Him. And He will say unto us: "Ye are swine, made in the Image of the Beast and with his mark; but come ye also!" And the wise ones and those of understanding will say: "Oh Lord, why dost Thou receive these men?" And He will say: "This is why I receive them, oh ye wise, this is why I receive them, oh ye of

understanding, that not one of them believed himself to be worthy of this." And He will hold out His hands to us and we shall fall down before Him . . . and we shall weep . . . and we shall understand all things!

(6) Although the episode has now attained its maximum intensity, the note of joy quickly dissipates. Raskolnikov takes Marmeladov home for a scene of external abasement bordering on slapstick, as the frightened wretch is manhandled by an hysterical wife before an amused audience of lodgers. At this point the emphasis shifts to Raskolnikov, whose reactions will be examined separately.

The characteristic dramatic structure, then, is created by the reversing of direction, by the alternating of positive and negative impressions. Its effect upon the reader is interesting. He is led to a conclusion, persuaded of it, then jerked about. A newer impression is formed, much stronger. That, too, gives way. The continued cracking up of expectations tends to loosen the reader's hold on his normal reactions. He grows uncertain; his power of orientation exhausts itself. He finds himself thrust, now morbidly receptive, into strange and often abysmal reaches of experience. The extravagance of the method, which leads Dostoevsky into massive scenes, is paid for by their overwhelming nervous momentum.

The method belongs naturally to a writer of Dostoevsky's complex outlook. Marmeladov's many-sidedness demands a series of intense, discrete revelations. The man is endlessly degraded, endlessly pure; and these two aspects of Marmeladov are integrally related; for his burning realization of the nature of infinite redemption (in his vision of the Lord's forgiveness) rises from his knowledge of infinite debasement. Dostoevsky keeps the paradox before the reader during the whole scene. One cannot take only the degradation, only the redemption; he is led by Dostoevsky's presentation to disbelieve either one, and finally to accept both as a single truth.

In almost all of Dostoevsky's extended scenes the same pattern of alternating directions appears, with the same kinds of value. It is found in Raskolnikov's three interviews with Porfiry, where the district attorney shows a blend of sympathy and calculation and the murderer shows a blend of confidence and panic. The technique is found also in Raskolnikov's baiting of the police official Zametov with reckless hints of his own guilt (Part II, Chapter VI), in Svidrigailov's attempt to seduce Dounia (Part VI, Chapter V), and elsewhere.

So much for the interior organization of the Marmeladov confession. Granting the incidental force of this episode, how does it fit Dostoevsky's total design in *Crime and Punishment*? The rough tendency of the seven chapters of Part I is certainly to present Raskolnikov's attitudes toward a projected murder and his execution of the murder itself. At first sight Marmeladov's confession has little or no bearing upon this event; hence its context needs a close look.

In Chapter I Raskolnikov has pawned a watch with Alyona Ivanovna, the nasty old woman he means to kill. His views of the projected murder are anything but clear. On the one hand he thinks of the murder as a courageous exploit (he likens himself to Jack the Giant-killer). On the other he regards the plan as "disgusting, loathsome, loathsome." The whole preliminary visit to Alyona Ivanovna has filled him with such revulsion that he enters the tavern for relief. Miraculously, food and drink supply it. "There is nothing in it all to worry about!" he tells himself. "It's simply physical derangement. Just a glass of beer, a piece of dry bread—and in one moment the brain is stronger, the mind is clearer and the will is firm!"

The key to the Marmeladov scene is found in this remark. Raskolnikov's beer-and-bread explanation of his own state of spirit strikes the theme of materialism which Marmeladov is to develop. Now, in

Chapter II, the would-be materialist, toying with the idea of murder as a kind of act of faith, confronts a drunkard who makes no sense in any materialistic terms—Marmeladov is merely a scrap of social refuse, a zero; but he impresses upon Raskolnikov the suspicion that the human soul resists quantitative reduction. Raskolnikov's reaction is by no means simple. At first his humanity is touched: he leaves part of his remaining cash in the Marmeladovs' window and departs. At once this humanity is swept aside by cynicism: "What a stupid thing I've done . . . they have Sonia and I want it myself. . . . Man grows used to everything, the scoundrel!" (Here is the pattern of alternating impressions again, now being used to expose Raskolnikov's duality.) Then the cynicism itself is displaced: "And what if I'm wrong? . . . What if man is not really a scoundrel, man in general, I mean, the whole race of mankind. . . ." This is the doubt which is to agitate Raskolnikov throughout the novel.

It is worth pointing out early that Dostoevsky's plots satisfy only partially the naive concept of plot as a network of causation. Marmeladov's confession produces, as noted earlier, no revision of Raskolnikov's murder plans. It provides him at the most with information of Sonia, the woman to whom he will turn one day; but a dozen-page monologue to lay bare the heart of a minor character is hardly an efficient device for that purpose. Of course plot does involve causation, but it also involves definition. Wishing to elaborate a human problem, a novelist with philosophic sensitivity will employ characters, episodes, sub-plots which may or may not advance the action causally but which do serve directly to clarify the central question.

In Marmeladov's confession Dostoevsky is showing Raskolnikov face to face in living terms with the alternatives of a critical question concerning the nature and value of individual personality. The drunkard's own value, as noted earlier,

is ambiguous: he demonstrates the villainess and the purity of human nature; but the ambiguity intensifies Raskolnikov's adventure rather than obscures it. In a similar way, each of the opening incidents of *Crime and Punishment* defines and dramatizes the conflicting scales of value in Raskolnikov's personality.

In Chapters III and IV Raskolnikov reacts to a letter from his mother. His sister Dounia, he learns, has engaged herself to the prosperous but mean-minded lawyer Luzhin. Mother and daughter are poverty-pinched; by means of the engagement they hope to help Raskolnikov to a brilliant career. So the betrothal amounts to a contract for prostitution, as Raskolnikov sees: "Sonia, Sonia Marmeladov, the eternal victim so long as the world lasts. Have you taken the measure of your sacrifice, both of you? Is it right? Can you bear it? Is it any use? Is there sense in it? And let me tell you, Dounia, Sonia's life is no worse than life with Mr. Luzhin."

The case of the sodden Marmeladov has suddenly become the case of the proud student Raskolnikov. The idea of "Sonia the eternal victim" takes hold of Raskolnikov as he wanders along the street, expanding a sense of compassion which is in danger of shriveling. A drunken girl staggers ahead of him, being trailed by a lecherous dandy. In rags though Raskolnikov is, he calls a policeman and produces twenty kopecks so that the girl may be driven home out of harm's way. Here is another definitive incident which, like Marmeladov's confession, illuminates the acute tensions within the protagonist. Raskolnikov reacts against his own charity: "He has carried off my twenty kopecks," he murmurs of the policeman. "Well, let him take as much from the other fellow to allow him to have the girl and so let it end. . . . Let them devour each other alive—what is it to me?" Compassion returns (once more the reversal-pattern); Raskolnikov imagines the future which awaits the drunken girl and all

like her. Abruptly he tries to discount the misery:

But what does it matter? That's as it should be, they tell us. A certain percentage, they tell us, must every year go . . . that way . . . to the devil, I suppose, so that the rest may remain chaste, and not be interfered with. . . . Once you've said "percentage" there's nothing more to worry about. If we had any other word . . . maybe we might feel more uneasy . . . But what if Dounia were one of the percentage? Of another one if not that one?

The language of materialistic rationalism—so significant throughout *Crime and Punishment*—here loses force at the entrance of a personal name; and the incident closes.

The worst of Raskolnikov's developing dilemma is not that he must choose between materialism and love but that he must apparently use one to satisfy the other. He must "do something" about his mother's news, "do it at once, and do it quickly": i.e., he must regard the pawnbroker as a mere statistic to be erased so that he can use her funds to rescue the mother and sister he loves. This conflict is transversed, as one sees later, by savage pride: Raskolnikov disdains the meanness of men in the mass; he determines to rise above them, to break the law of the herd and prove his individuality. Thus his murder project is coming to represent a morbid tangle of compassionate and misanthropic impulses, so that the murder itself instead of solving anything will only precipitate an acute crisis.

The remainder of Part I continues to clarify these impulses. After Raskolnikov has rescued the drunken girl and then partially relapsed into cynicism, he dreams the purgative nightmare of the peasant clubbing his mare to death (Chapter V). Here in the most terrifying concreteness he sees what bloodshed must mean to him personally, regardless of theories. He wakes and renounces the murder. Unfortunately he has not yet extricated himself morally. Before the necessary process of

definition can be completed, an overheard conversation persuades Raskolnikov that a unique chance for the murder has arrived. He is not strong enough to resist; and he drifts into the crime (Chapters VI and VII). Thus Part I closes.

The other five parts of *Crime and Punishment* and the epilogue show how the criminal is "caught"; but the network of causation, so important to the detective story, will remain subordinate. Dostoevsky's main effort will be to define, to show the full impact of a central conflict involving the worth of human life—a conflict so desperate that Raskolnikov will seem to his friends to be "alternating between two characters" (Part III, Ch. II). The kind of relevance suggested here for the Marmeladov scene can be looked for again in the episodes stressing the sensualist Svidrigailov, the muddled radical Lebeziatnikov, Luzhin the exponent of a voracious middle class, Pulcheria the selfless mother, Razumihin the naive giant who becomes Raskolnikov's brother-in-law. Granting that these characters do occasionally motivate the central drama, their chief service is to outline the moral world in which Raskolnikov is trying to find his way.

But perhaps the reader of the second chapter of *Crime and Punishment* will be hardest struck, not by the structural problems discussed up to this point, but by Dostoevsky's apparently inconsistent use of realism. The tavern setting shows, on the one hand, that its author can produce a vivid selection of external detail whenever he chooses:

[The proprietor] wore a full coat and a horribly greasy black satin waistcoat, with no cravat, and his whole face seemed smeared with oil like an iron lock. At the counter stood a boy of about fourteen, and there was another boy somewhat younger who handed whatever was wanted. On the counter lay some sliced cucumber, some pieces of dried black bread, and some fish, chopped up small, all smelling very bad. It was insufferably close, and so heavy with the fumes of spirits that five minutes in

such an atmosphere might well make a man drunk.

But realism is boldly violated in the same scene. Marmeladov begins to speak, as one might expect, with the incoherent loquacity of the alcoholic. Within a few paragraphs, however, he has shaken off the stultifying effects of a five-day drunk and attained, in common with most Dostoevsky characters, the articulate powers of a poet at white heat. Marmeladov makes—unrealistically—a fine selection of realistic detail, to put forth the shame of lying drunk while his daughter brought in the proceeds of prostitution. He goes on and on, rising at last to prophetic eloquence in his vision of the Lord's forgiveness; for a Dostoevsky character has always the gift of tongues, and in a strong Dostoevsky scene everyone has plenty of time to listen. Elsewhere the reader will find (in Raskolnikov's nightmares for instance) that Dostoevsky's characters dream with the same dramatic continuity and exquisite concreteness that mark their conversation.

This apparent incongruity of manner is partially explained by the familiar principle that realistic detail can reinforce a highly selective vision. Realism is a great convincer, in other words. Dostoevsky uses it, partly no doubt to bolster the more theatrical element in his work, but mainly as running support for what might be called psychological poetry: the extraordinarily dramatic and consecutive rendering of the inner life. Thus Marmeladov is made to display an abnormal mastery of realistic detail in his own confession: like Dostoevsky's other characters he is given the power to endorse his experience with all the physical detail necessary.

More important, whenever an author treats the objective world—the world of the senses, the world of material fact—he reveals the kind and degree of value which he attaches to that world. Dostoevsky creates an external world of great solidity; but he frequently suspends that world in order to let his characters feel

and express without limitation—and from this one infers that Dostoevsky sees a serious incompatibility between the world of material fact and the world of feeling. Certainly the particular kind of external reality which Dostoevsky presents is sordid, almost never physically beautiful. Marmeladov is found in a dive; his person is bedraggled, his face greenish; his home is "littered up with rags of all sorts." Raskolnikov, though "exceptionally handsome," appears in rags and fever, starving in a garret where the yellow paper is peeling off the walls. Beauty in Dostoevsky is beauty of feeling, especially beauty of compassion, forgiveness, generosity which transcend the behavior ordinarily permitted by such external conditions. Marmeladov's vision of forgiveness for drunkards illustrates such beauty: the man has no real hope of escaping his sin, of making good the evil he has done, of regaining self-respect; but his ardor for purity bursts through for one moment of realization in the middle of a fume-ridden tavern.

As a further instance of this marked antithesis between the inner life and the world of objective fact, economic power rarely increases the store of human happiness in Dostoevsky's fiction. Exalted moments occur chiefly in the lives of those least fortified by material security: e.g., the prostitute Sonia, Razumihin the threadbare scholar, the disgraced Captain Snegiryov of *The Brothers Karamazov*, the monk Zossima, Kolya Krassotkin and his playmates. Some of Dostoevsky's deepest pathos arises from the clumsiness of gentle souls compelled to grub for a living in an irrelevant economic system. Marmeladov cannot cope with breadwinning; his consumptive wife ends her life in a fantastic bid to raise money by street-dancing; Raskolnikov's mother "knits her eyes out" in an ineffective effort to eke out her pension. Even the damned—whose materialism takes the forms of sensuality or political opportunism—are strangely indifferent to ownership as a

medium of self-realization: Raskolnikov neglects to count the spoils of murder; Dmitri Karamazov handles his financial interests like a drunken sailor. It is only in humanity at its meanest that the acquisitive drive seriously governs action. Dounia's suitor, Luzhin, lives by acquisition; so do Alyona Ivanovna, the pawnbroker, and Ratikin, the venomous divinity student of *The Brothers Karamazov*. These are beings beneath damnation, so to speak.

The deeper one goes into the Marmeladov episode, the more he is likely to find that most of its distinctive features express, in one way or another, a basic opposition which will later emerge wherever he reads in Dostoevsky. The question of mood may be taken as a final illustration. Marmeladov's confession gives many readers their first experience of that quality in Dostoevsky's work which may aptly be called demonic, rising from the sordid surroundings, the poverty and feverish behavior of the actors, the agonies of humiliation, guilt, and suffering far beyond any middle-class concept of normality and made all the more poignant by broken visions of nobility. Scene after scene may open into hell—the dreams of Raskolnikov, the death of Katerina Ivanovna, the last night of Svidrigailov, the symposium at Fyodor Karamazov's, Dmitri Karamazov's orgy at Mokroe on the night of the murder, Ivan Karamazov's fantasy of the Grand Inquisitor and Ivan's hallucinated dialogue with his alter ego the devil. All in all, Dostoevsky's inferno is tremendous, but it must be related to an opposite force in him, his power of laughter.

Though Marmeladov is a lost soul, he is also a clown. With grandiloquent politeness he inquires whether Raskolnikov, a perfect stranger, has ever spent the night on a hay barge on the Neva (Marmeladov himself has, and carries bits of hay on his clothing to prove it). The chaotic disappearance of the family possessions, all bargained for drink, injects a

humorous disorder into Marmeladov's efforts to give a coherent account of himself. "Sonia, as you may well fancy, has had no education. I did make an effort four years ago to give her a course of geography and universal history, but as I was not very well up in these subjects myself and we had no suitable books, and what books we had . . . hm, anyway, we have not even those now, so all our instruction came to an end. We stopped at Cyprus of Persia." Again, when Raskolnikov brings him home, Marmeladov helpfully lifts both arms so that his furious wife may search his empty pockets. She drags him into the room by the hair; he assists her by crawling along on his knees. With his head banging against the floor, he stammers out to Raskolnikov: "This . . . is a positive con-so-la-tion, ho-nou-red, sir." The sentiment is so preposterous and yet so true of both the man's probity and his downfall that one may easily laugh, without in the last losing compassion for the victim. Broad comedy like this may appear in flashes at the moments of greatest horror in Dostoevsky's fiction—for instance, when the bureaucratic soldier tries to prohibit Svidrigailov's suicide, or when the devil of Ivan Karamazov's hallucination begins to chaff his creator. Its effect is twofold. Through its incongruity the comedy enlarges one's sense of the ugly; but its lightness attests the sanity of the imagination which produced the whole and thus lends sublimity to scenes which otherwise might seem savagely morbid.

The inferno of Marmeladov's drunkenness cannot illustrate, except by contrast, that far extreme in Dostoevsky's mood: those episodes in *Crime and Punishment* and elsewhere which radiate good humor and which can be called his paradise. In particular Razumihin, the fellow-student of the murderer, brings with him an open-hearted exuberance. As he crashes drunkenly into love with Dounia, writhes in gigantic remorse the next morning, takes up steadily the burdens

of "son and brother" to Raskolnikov's family—in every appearance his child-like eagerness conquers embarrassments, dispels the miasmic air in which the novel began. In Dostoevsky's later masterpieces this sunny quality goes beyond humor and becomes something tranquil and benign, both naive and wise, as in the personalities of Prince Myshkin of *The Idiot* and Alyosha of *The Brothers Karamazov*. (A better illustration of Dostoevsky's paradise would be harder to find than Book X, Chapter VI, of *The Brothers Karamazov*, in which Alyosha wins the devotion of that patronizing thirteen-year-old cynic, Kolya Krassotkin.)

What lies behind all these dualities of treatment? A dialogue, I think—a religious question and a religious answer, neither complete alone, both together containing Dostoevsky's truth. This novelist questions the moral relativism which has rushed in wherever religious faith has crumbled. In particular, he has traced out the spiritual implications of "scientific" materialism as it encourages men to interpret their happiness in a quantitative framework. Raskolnikov and Ivan Karamazov are in part the New Man. Raskolnikov has become infatuated with the incubus of the Superman, the hero who finds law and certainty in his own individuality and who proves it by imposing it upon the world. Ivan's hypothesis is the same, that for the man without God "egoism, even to crime, must become, not only lawful but even recognised as the inevitable, the most rational, even honourable outcome of his position" (Bk. II, Ch. VI). Where George Eliot, pioneer in sociology that she was, remained persuaded that society changes conservatively, her Russian contemporary foresaw the leap into the bloody era of "reptile devouring reptile" which men would make once personality had lost its absolute worth. Raskolnikov's final nightmare (Ch. II of the Epilogue) could be taken as a premonition of the twentieth century; and so could the madness of Ivan.

Marmeladov stands as a kind of prologue to the reader's experience of Dostoevsky. In the midst of the netherworld he foreshadows so well, where victor and victim share the same depravity and torment, the truths of human worth and solidarity will prove themselves inextinguishable. Marmeladov sees salvation at his basest moment. The loveliness of Sonia "the eternal victim" will brighten as the darkness deepens. The Grand Inquisitor of *The Brothers Karamazov*, at the end of his calculated blasphemy, will receive the kiss of Christ. Dostoevsky has been accused of making abysmal sin a prerequisite for redemption. It would be fairer to say that abysmal sin is implicit in modern man and that Dostoevsky

has provided an art which takes account of it and transforms it. His ambiguity arises from his conviction that faith and despair are a single truth, that redemption perpetually draws its full force from the terrible fact of damnation. Thus a double vision penetrates his great novels: the infernal mood alternates with the celestial; sordid material detail alternates with poetry of feeling; the personality of his protagonists splits between angel and demon; given scenes oscillate from positive to negative. Such a distinctive fusion of outlook and technique gives to Dostoevsky's fiction that fateful tenseness and harmonious fullness which in one way or another belong to great narrative literature.

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### And Gladly Teach

When the Papers came in, he thought he must have Got Hold of the Wrong Batch. They didn't seem to be Talking About the things *he* had been Talking About. He knew the English Language had done a lot of Borrowing, but he didn't know it had borrowed So Much. The Theme Writers often Took Things for Granite, they Preformed Brilliantly in Athletics, they ate their Desert in the Dinning Room while dressed in their Best Cloths, they Behaved like Angles and kept up their Moral, they had, or Could Of had, Expierences with Burgulars, Villians, Phamplets, Prespiration, and Mischevious Members of the Femine Sex. They were Familiar with Airoplanes and Similar Equipment. They Believed that one of the Principle Factors of a Person is Undoubtably Enviornment, and that it is a great Tragedy that some Governments won't leave the Rest of the World live Peacably, without Allways Attacting them. They said that School Work was Druggery, but they would try their Upmost to do it Couragously, Irregardless.

—Loy E. Davis (Purdue), "The Fable of the Young Man Who Read the Papers," *AAUP Bulletin* (Summer 1955)

# The Three Motives of Raskolnikov: A Reinterpretation of *Crime and Punishment*

MAURICE BEEBE

THE WIDE appeal of *Crime and Punishment*, probably the most teachable of Dostoevsky's novels, seems to depend primarily on its subject matter. Students of varied backgrounds and interests are attracted to and held by this story of a young man who brutally murders two women and pays the price of his crime. After reading it, students are likely to find the latest Mickey Spillane novel or last night's TV drama pale and thin in comparison. It is only when they ask themselves how and why it is better than the modern psychological thrillers they have seen or heard or read that they begin to realize that the value of this novel, like all works of art, depends more on its manner than on its matter.

If we approach *Crime and Punishment* with a knowledge of Dostoevsky's character and his method of writing, we are likely to be surprised at the disciplined skill the structure of the novel reveals. Dostoevsky was a man who could not control the events of his own life, a neurotic who dissipated and wasted his energies in several directions at once, yet who managed somehow not merely to control the imagined life in his novel, but to order it with an almost Jamesian economy. *Crime and Punishment* meets the test of unity in fiction: all the parts contribute to the whole, and the parts may be fully understood only when the whole is known. Joseph Warren Beach has demonstrated that this unity may be attributed in part to what he calls the technique of the "dramatic present"—Dostoevsky's careful restriction of time, place, and center of interest (*The Twentieth-Century Novel*, 1932, pp. 155-163).

We may recognize Dostoevsky's adherence to the dramatic unities, yet fail to see that the ideological content of the novel is as carefully unified as the narrative structure. For instance, some critics regret the Epilogue. To them, Raskolnikov's regeneration appears to be insufficiently motivated, and they see no necessary connection between the crime and its ultimate result: as Ernest J. Simmons has put it, "The Epilogue is manifestly the weakest section of the novel, and the regeneration of Raskolnikov under the influence of the Christian humility and love of Sonya is neither artistically palatable nor psychologically sound" (*Dostoevski*, 1940, p. 165). I shall try to show that, on the contrary, the ending is artistically and psychologically inevitable because the basic motive of regeneration is the same as the underlying motive for the crime. The spiritual principle of the novel, represented in part by Sonia, is equated with the passive will-to-suffering that impelled Raskolnikov to punish himself by murdering Alyona Ivanovna and her sister. Without the Epilogue much that precedes would seem confused and contradictory.

Theme and technique overlap. One of the ways in which Dostoevsky unifies his novel is through this technique of "doubles." The dual nature of his heroes is, of course, a commonplace of criticism. Because his protagonists are usually split personalities, the psychological and philosophical drama in a Dostoevsky novel is expressed in terms of a conflict between opposite poles of sensibility and intelligence, spirit and mind, passiveness and aggressiveness, self-sacrifice and self-

assertion, God-man and Man-god, or, sometimes, "good" and "bad." To dramatize this conflict, Dostoevsky often gives his characters several alter egos or doubles, each projecting one of the extremes of the split personality. Even when the hero is not present in the scene, he may remain the center of interest because the characters present are likely to represent different facets of his personality. According to most interpretations of *Crime and Punishment*, the struggle within Raskolnikov becomes physical, external action as he wavers between Svidrigailov, epitome of self-willed evil, and Sonia, epitome of self-sacrifice and spiritual goodness.

When we apply this thesis of doubles to the novel, we meet difficulties. The doubles are themselves complex personalities. Self-effacing Sonia, who became a prostitute to support her family, refuses to give up a pretty ribbon. She reads not only the New Testament, but also "books of romantic tendency" and, "with great interest," George Lewes's *Physiology*. Svidrigailov, whom critics describe as "a man who has chosen to be above the moral law, merely to satisfy his appetites and greed" (Slonim), "a kind of obscene double or shadow" (Beach), "the entirely loathsome Svidrigailov" (Woodhouse), "the incarnation of the evil will" (Murry), "the monster" (Lloyd), and "unredeemed scoundrel" (Roe), is, I think, a somewhat attractive and genial villain, an allegedly self-willed man who, ghost- or conscience-ridden, has trouble deciding just what to will and who ends by doing good. The conclusion suggests that Raskolnikov's problem was solved when, quite suddenly, "He was simply feeling. Life had stepped into the place of theory" (Mod. Lib. ed., p. 531). For Dostoevsky, here at any rate, the intellect is evil, the senses good. What, then, are we to say about Svidrigailov, who lives by senses and feelings alone, all of whose sins are sins of passion?

Perhaps the ambiguity results from a

failure to recognize that man is not split into two parts, but divided into three: Mind, Body, and Spirit. The conflict in the tripartite Raskolnikov is a struggle between the intellectual, sensual, and spiritual parts of his nature. Each of these three parts corresponds to a reason or motive for his crime, and for each part, each motive, there is a separate alter ego: Luzhin, who stands for the intellect; Svidrigailov, who represents the senses; and Sonia, who is a symbol of spirit. If we read the novel in terms of "triples" rather than "doubles," we may not only do justice to Svidrigailov, but also discover that the novel is unified thematically as well as dramatically.

Dr. Frederic Wertham, in his *The Show of Violence* (1944, p. 168), makes a useful distinction between *reason* and *motive*: "*Reason* is the conscious explanation a man makes for himself or an outsider before, during, and after a deed. *Motive* is the real driving force which is at least partly unconscious and which can be understood only as part of a continuing and developing process." Using this distinction, we may say that within Raskolnikov there are three motives which during the course of the narrative rise to the surface of his consciousness and become reasons for his crime. The first of these, his wish to rob and murder the old pawnbroker that he may administer justice by distributing her ill-gotten riches to the more deserving poor or, more probably, that he may finance the education that is to make him a benefactor of mankind, is *motive* only in that it is rooted in Raskolnikov's dominating characteristic, the egoistic pride that makes him want to play God. Pride combined with intelligence and unencumbered with spiritual or ethical feeling leads to the doctrine of expedient self-interest, which is the intellectual justification of the crime. Because this motive supplies the idea for the crime, it becomes a reason almost immediately—and almost as immediately it is repudiated as the real cause.

The final dismissal of "thinking" in the last few pages of the novel should come as no surprise, for throughout the book the intelligence is presented as essentially an evil power. "Compassion is forbidden nowadays by science itself," says Marmeladov (p. 14). He quotes Lebeziatnikov, the young progressive, who is supposed to have said in regard to Sonia, "How can a highly educated man like me live in the same rooms with a girl like that?" (p. 19). After Raskolnikov has given almost the last of his coppers to the destitute family of Marmeladov, he reproaches himself with the significant words, "What a stupid thing I've done" (p. 28). Intelligence without feeling is indicted often in the following pages of the novel, most memorably in the mention of the Paris scientists who were conducting experiments "as to the possibility of curing the insane, simply by logical argument" (p. 411) and in Raskolnikov's dream of the intelligent microbes (pp. 528-529). The "progressive" Lebeziatnikov can do good only because he "really was rather stupid" and had "attached himself to the cause of progress and 'our younger generation' from enthusiasm" (p. 354).

Luzhin, on the other hand, adopts "many of the convictions of 'our most rising generation'" (p. 36) because he finds them useful; they help him to get ahead. Attempting to make an impression upon the students Raskolnikov and Razumihin, he defends the "progress" that has been made "in the name of science and economic truth":

Hitherto, for instance, if I were told, "love thy neighbour," what came of it? . . . It came to my tearing my coat in half to share with my neighbour and we both were left half-naked. . . . Science now tells us, love yourself before all men, for everything in the world rests on self-interest. You love yourself and manage your own affairs properly and your coat remains whole. Economic truth adds that the better private affairs are managed in society—the more whole coats, so to say—the firmer are its foundations and

the better is the common welfare organised too. Therefore, in acquiring wealth solely and exclusively for myself, I am acquiring, so to speak, for all, and helping to bring to pass my neighbour's getting a little more than a torn coat; and that not from private, personal liberality, but as a consequence of the general advance. The idea is simple, but unhappily it has been a long time reaching us, being hindered by idealism and sentimentality. (pp. 147-148)

This theory stated baldly by a man whom Raskolnikov detests strikes close to home, and the young murderer retorts, "Why, carry out logically the theory you were advocating just now, and it follows that people may be killed" (p. 150).

For this is precisely what has happened. The link between the first of Raskolnikov's motives and the theory represented by Luzhin is made explicit through the word *prejudice*. Luzhin is "an opponent of all prejudices" (p. 36), pleased that "many injurious prejudices have been rooted up and turned into ridicule" (p. 147). The young man whose conversation overheard in a restaurant first gave Raskolnikov the idea for the murder said, "We have to correct and direct nature, and, but for that, we should drown in an ocean of prejudice" (p. 67).

To refuse to give away half a coat is one thing; to steal a coat is another. But as long as man is not alone, self-interest begins in the passive refusal to help others and leads almost inevitably to the aggressive use of others. Luzhin thinks of Dounia as a potential business and social asset, of sex solely in terms of possession: "This creature," he thinks, "would be slavishly grateful all her life for his heroic condescension, and would humble herself in the dust before him, and he would have absolute, unbounded power over her!" (pp. 301-302). The most unfeeling, cold-blooded, and self-willed crime in the novel is not Raskolnikov's murder of the old pawnbroker nor Svidrigailov's attempted seduction of Dounia, but Luzhin's false accusation of Sonia on the day of her father's funeral. In fact,

if we look for the real symbolic antithesis of Sonia, we are much more likely to find it in Luzhin, the enemy who attempts to use her for his own selfish interests, than in Svidrigailov, the benefactor who makes a disinterested offering before her. If Luzhin appears to be an unlikely representative of the principle of intelligence, so do the Paris scientists and the microbes. The paradox results from Dostoevsky's conception of intelligence, which he consistently associates with the "western" and "progressive" doctrines of expediency and utilitarianism. Because self-interest cannot be disinterested, it is not even particularly intelligent in an objective sense, but it is the only kind of intelligence presented as *intelligence* in *Crime and Punishment*.

Raskolnikov's first reason, his rational one, is dismissed even before Luzhin appears to make it look ridiculous. Raskolnikov knows that there is a deeper motivation for his crime. "If it all has really been done deliberately and not idiotically," he asks himself, "if I really had a certain and definite object, how is it I did not even glance into the purse and don't know what I had there, for which I have undergone these agonies, and have deliberately undertaken this base, filthy degrading business?" (p. 110).

Raskolnikov's second motive also appears to him first in the form of a rational theory: his much-discussed notion of the "extraordinary" man who, above good and evil, may transgress any law that stands in the way of his uttering a "new word." "If such a man," he says, "is forced for the sake of his idea to step over a corpse or wade through blood, he can, I maintain, find within himself, in his conscience, a sanction for wading through blood" (p. 256). The second theory or reason is only a refinement upon the first, but the distinction is an important one. It is not the "idea" that sanctions the bloodshed, but the "conscience" of the doer. It is this aspect of the theory which shocks Razumihin:

"Well, brother, if you are really serious . . . You are right, of course, in saying that it's not new, that it's like what we've read and heard a thousand times already; but what is really *original* in all this, and is exclusively your own, to my horror, is that you sanction bloodshed *in the name of conscience*, and, excuse my saying so, with such fanaticism. . . . That, I take it, is the point of your article. But that sanction of bloodshed *by conscience* is to my mind . . . more terrible than the official, legal sanction of bloodshed" (p. 258).

Raskolnikov commits a murder not that he may be an "extraordinary" man but that he may *see* if he is one. "I wanted to find out then and quickly whether I was a louse like everybody else or a man," he tells Sonia, "whether I can step over barriers or not, whether I dare stoop to pick up or not, whether I am a trembling creature or whether I have the *right* . . ." (p. 406). And he adds, "Listen: When I went then to the old woman's I only went to *try*. . . . You may be sure of that" (p. 407). The real "extraordinary" man, he has already admitted, does not have to test himself: "No, those men are not made so. The real *Master* to whom all is permitted storms Toulin, makes a massacre in Paris, *forgets* an army in Egypt, *wastes* half a million men in the Moscow expedition and gets off with a jest at Vilna. . . . Napoleon, the pyramids, Waterloo, and a wretched skinny old woman, a pawnbroker with a red trunk under her bed. . . . 'A Napoleon creep under an old woman's bed! Ugh, how loathsome' " (pp. 268-269).

The real motive behind this second reason is suggested when Raskolnikov admits to himself that he knew *before the murder* that he would be shaken and horrified by it, that he would be unable to withstand the test. "And how dared I," he asks himself, "knowing myself, knowing how I should be, take up an axe and shed blood! I ought to have known beforehand. . . . Ah, but I did know!"

(p. 268). He has, in a sense, committed a murder for the thrill of it, because of his fascination with the horror of the very idea; and the murder is, in part, an act of aggressive lust.

This motive is revealed symbolically in Raskolnikov's dream of the horse beaten by drunken peasants. Just before he has this dream, Raskolnikov encounters a drunken girl, apparently seduced and abandoned by one gentleman and now pursued by another. He tries to help her by giving a policeman money to see her home, but no sooner has he performed this act of disinterested charity than he is overcome by revulsion. "Let them be!" he calls to the astonished policeman. "What is it to do with you? Let her go! Let him amuse himself" (p. 51). The girl, who has mumbled, "Oh shameful wretches, they won't let me alone!" and who has placed both Raskolnikov and the policeman in the same category of wretches, is the association which brings on the dream. The girl becomes the unfortunate horse, and the "shameful wretches" are now the peasants who brutally beat the horse with sticks and *finally* *an axe* until it is dead. Significantly, when Raskolnikov awakens, he immediately exclaims, "Can it be, can it be, that I shall really take an axe, that I shall strike her on the head, split her skull open . . .?" (p. 61). The progression from seduced girl to beaten horse to murdered pawnbroker tells us much about the strain of aggressive sensuality that lies within Raskolnikov, a taint which he denies himself on the conscious level. After the murder he continues to associate the drunken girl with his victims: "But when he reached the K— Boulevard where two days before he had come upon that girl, his laughter suddenly ceased. Other ideas crept into his mind" (p. 109).

The introvert Raskolnikov is, however, more masochistic than sadistic. The passive will-to-suffering is stronger within him than the aggressive will to make others suffer. Dostoevsky does little more

than suggest the sadistic side of Raskolnikov in order that he may place more emphasis on the will-to-suffering which is finally revealed as the basic, underlying motive of his crime. The greatest advantage of Dostoevsky's technique of alter egos is that it permits him to write with greater economy and clarity than would otherwise be possible. Once he has established the link between the hero and his symbolic "double" or "triple," he can show both sides at once. Thus Svidrigailov not only stands for the sensualist in Raskolnikov but also represents the outer-directed form of the sensuality which in Raskolnikov is primarily inner-directed. For Dostoevsky, who wrote that "experience *pro* and *contra*" is essential for "life's calling and consciousness" (Simmons, p. 150), each thing requires its opposite—indeed, includes its opposite.

Svidrigailov is usually described as self-willed. He is self-willed in the sense that he recognizes no spiritual force outside of himself—even the ghosts that plague him rise, he insists, from his own illness—but if *self-willed* implies that he controls his existence, then the designation is a misleading one. He is the victim of instincts within himself that he has not summoned into existence, but which are simply there. When he finally appears in person, he seems to have difficulty living up to the reputation that has preceded him, and he proves as capable of doing good as proficient in doing evil. His references to a certain "journey" indicate that he considers suicide from the time he first appears in Raskolnikov's room, and at that time there is no reason why we should not accept his assertion that his offer of money to Dounia is made "with no ulterior motive" (p. 286). What he does for Sonia and the Marmeladov orphans appears to be disinterested. As for his pursuit of Dounia, "you've only to assume," he tells Raskolnikov, "that I, too, am a man *et nihil humanum . . .* in a word, that I am capable of being attracted and falling in love (which does

not depend on our will), then everything can be explained in the most natural manner. The question is, am I a monster or am I myself a victim?" (p. 275).

Although Svidrigailov appears to be a victim of the lust within him, he tries to rationalize his sensuality. Defending his passion for women, he says: "In this vice at least there is something permanent, founded indeed upon nature and not dependent on fantasy, something present in the blood like an ever-burning ember, for ever setting one on fire and maybe not to be quickly extinguished, even with years" (p. 456). Because he has seen no evidence of anything else more noble or permanent than this natural instinct, his only purpose in life is to seek out new thrills.

Svidrigailov's view rests, of course, upon an unfavorable impression of human nature. And nothing ever happens to him that would disprove his theory that man is a brute. It is significant that all of his victims appear to be willing and that he, when the chance arises, is incapable of rape. When he struck his wife with a switch, she was, he suggests, "very likely pleased at my, so to say, warmth," for "human beings in general, indeed, greatly love to be insulted" (p. 277). The young girl to whom he is engaged, who sometimes throws him a glance that "positively scorches"; the five-year-old in the dream who with a look of shameless depravity invites his embrace; even Dounia, who once was "softened in the heat of propaganda" (p. 480) and who, when there is no turning back, discovers that she would rather submit than kill the man who would rather be killed than denied—these are typical of Svidrigailov's victims, victims not of Svidrigailov but of what they share in common with Svidrigailov.

For Raskolnikov, Svidrigailov is as embarrassing a personification of his second theory as Luzhin was of his first theory. "My own conscience is quite at rest on that score" (p. 276), Svidrigailov's reply to Raskolnikov's accusation that he

has murdered his wife, is undoubtedly as disquieting as Luzhin's talk of overcoming "prejudice." The second theory, like the first, is repudiated both subjectively and objectively. Raskolnikov sees in Svidrigailov that his theory does not work, for Svidrigailov proves that it is impossible to live by instinct or "conscience" alone. When he has a chance to take Dounia by force, he finds that he cannot do so. Haunted by his victims, overcome by revulsion, he can only commit suicide, and his suicide, a repudiation of all that he has done earlier, is probably his first and only entirely self-willed act.

The third and most important of Raskolnikov's three motives is his will to suffer. The motive becomes a conscious reason when he says to himself, "And what shows that I am utterly a louse . . . is that I am perhaps viler and more loathsome than the louse I killed, and *I felt beforehand* that I should tell myself so *after* killing her. Can anything be compared with the horror of that! The vulgarity! The abjectness!" (p. 270). He is like Marmeladov, who said, "I drink that I may suffer twice as much!" (p. 16). And when he confesses to Sonia, she is horrified not by the deed itself nor by the fate of the slain women, but by the effect that Raskolnikov's crime has had upon him: "What have you done—what have you done to yourself!" (p. 399).

Only if we recognize this masochistic motive in Raskolnikov can we understand much of his conduct both before and after the murder. *Motive*, "a continuing and developing process," determines Raskolnikov's actions after the *reasons* are rejected. The absence of remorse may be explained not only by his sense of the chain of fate that led to the murder but also by his overwhelming conviction that he is the principal victim of his crime. To protect his mother and sister, he tries to cling desperately to the theories or reasons that he thinks can justify the crime, but he is also driven by the urge to confess and take his punishment, a private form of which he has already begun

to inflict upon himself in his semi-confessions and in his return to the scene of the crime. When finally he does confess, it is not because he has been trapped by Porfiry Petrovich—he could, after all, take Svidrigailov's way out—nor because he has yet submitted to Sonia's "humanity," but because the desire to accept suffering has been the underlying motive of his life.

We are told on the first page of the novel that Raskolnikov "had become so completely absorbed in himself, and isolated from his fellows that he dreaded meeting . . . any one at all." This sense of alienation is not the product of his obsession with the idea of murder, but something that appears to be deeply rooted in his nature. It revealed itself long before he thought of the murder. We know very little of his childhood, but the dream-episode of the beaten horse tells us that he was extremely sensitive, and we may conjecture that perhaps from that moment—or some such moment—he began to withdraw, denying in himself what he held in common with the human brutes. At the university, "he kept aloof from every one, went to see no one, and did not welcome any one who came to see him, and indeed every one soon gave him up. . . . He seemed to some of his comrades to look down upon them all as children, as though their beliefs and interests were beneath him" (p. 52). We know too that he was once engaged to his landlady's daughter. "She was an ugly little thing," he tells his mother and sister, "I really don't know what drew me to her then—I think it was because she was always ill. If she had been lame or hunchback, I believe I should have liked her better still" (p. 227). No doubt he felt compassion for the girl, but in the relish with which he describes her ugliness there is something of that masochism which made Stavrogin of *The Possessed* marry a simple-minded cleaning woman and to confess "anything more monstrous it was impossible to imagine." There is pride, too, and a sense of God-like superiority,

not unrelated to Luzhin's comments on the advantages of marrying a penniless woman, and what in retrospect appears to have been a rather desperate attempt to escape aloneness, to participate at any cost. If the girl had lived, Raskolnikov would probably not have committed a crime.

In Dostoevsky's first outline of the plot of the novel, preserved in a letter to the editor Katkov, he wrote, "The feeling of separation and dissociation from humanity which he [Raskolnikov] experiences at once after he has committed the crime, is something he cannot bear."<sup>1</sup> But the alienation is cause as well as temporary result of the crime. When, after the murder, he tells Sonia, "Did I murder the old woman? I murdered myself, not her!" (p. 407), he means, I take it, that he has destroyed his separateness. For a time, his action has seemed to alienate him more than ever from his fellow men, but by the end of the novel he has identified his particular suffering with the suffering that is the natural lot of humanity: making this discovery, he joins society. What, intellectually rationalized, was to have proven his superiority and right to detachment from lesser men only reveals to him what he has in common with mankind.

Porfiry Petrovich tells Raskolnikov of a prisoner he once knew who "seized a brick and flung it at the governor . . . [and] 'took his suffering'" (p. 441). The incident is described in greater detail in *The House of the Dead*, Dostoevsky's reminiscences of his experiences in a Siberian prison:

There was a convict in the prison who . . . was distinguished for his mild behaviour. . . . he hardly ever spoke to anyone. He was looked upon as a bit queer in the religious way. . . . he was continually reading the Bible. . . . One day he went up and told the sergeant that he would not go to work. It

<sup>1</sup>Quoted by David Magarshack in the Introduction to his translation of *Crime and Punishment* (Penguin Books, 1951), p. 13.

was reported to the major; he flew into a rage. . . . The convict threw himself upon him with a brick he had got ready beforehand, but he missed his aim. He was seized, tried and punished. . . . Three days later. . . . As he lay dying he said that he meant no harm to anyone, but was only seeking suffering. (trans. Garnett, 1915, p. 30)

Here is, in gist, the subject of *Crime and Punishment*: a man who "hardly ever spoke to anyone," who was in comparison with his fellows an intellectual, determines to attack or kill an expendable person (the major in *The House of the Dead* is as despicable as the old pawnbroker) in order that he may attain suffering, which is somehow related to religion.

Porfiry mentions the incident in relation to Nikolay, who has inexplicably confessed to a crime he did not commit, and who, like the prisoner, is deeply religious: "And do you know he is an Old Believer, or rather a dissenter? There have been Wanderers in his family, and he was for two years in a village under the spiritual guidance of a certain elder. . . . And what's more, he wanted to run into the wilderness! . . . Do you know, Rodion Romanovitch, the force of the word 'suffering' among some of these people! It's not a question of suffering for some one's benefit, but simply, 'one must suffer'" (pp. 440-441). Raskolnikov, the young intellectual, has denied religion, but he has been deeply attracted to the religious sufferers: to the landlady's daughter; to Marmeladov, who drank that he might "suffer twice as much" and who enjoyed being beaten by his wife; and to Sonia, whom he defended, he told her, "because of your great suffering" (p. 316). For this aspect of his character, Raskolnikov has not one, but three alter egos: Sonia, her father, and Nikolay.

The western reader—and certainly the average student—may have difficulty understanding this association of suffering with religion. But suffering is a matter of feeling, and feeling may be either

sensual or spiritual. As long as Raskolnikov seeks in suffering a masochistic pleasure demanded by his particular psychological make-up, his aloneness, the second motive remains dominant; when he recognizes in suffering a force greater than himself outside of himself, his motivation becomes spiritual and, in time, a conscious reason by which to live. The God in Whom Raskolnikov comes to believe, Sonia's God, "does everything" (p. 318). He is more like the amoral God of the Book of Job than like the benevolent God of conventional belief, and He is superior to human reason. "Dostoevsky's heroes inherit the Kingdom of God," said André Gide (*Dostoevsky*, 1926, p. 98), "only by the denial of mind and will and the surrender of personality."

Raskolnikov never repented of his crime because he did not hold himself responsible for the murder. He had fancied that he could plan and carry out the deed, but when the time came to act, it was as if he were impelled by forces over which he had no control, by "some decree of blind fate" (p. 525). Man must suffer, he decides, because man, his intellect a delusion and its power demonic, trapped by his instinctive brutality and the conspiracy of his victims, does not will his destiny. "Not on earth, but up yonder," Marmeladov has cried out, "they grieve over men, they weep, but they don't blame them, they don't blame them! But it hurts more when they don't blame!" (p. 23). The aloneness of man is offended by the gods' refusal to blame what they cannot blame, but once suffering, man's bondage, is accepted, man feels a part of something beyond aloneness, feels no longer that he can be a god but that he is a part of the God that is "everything." The revelation that comes to Raskolnikov through love and humility "in prison, in freedom" (p. 525), is inevitable because it is the obverse side, the *pro*, of the will-to-suffering, the *contra*, that has been throughout the entire novel his primary motivation.

# Gogol's *Dead Souls*: the Degrees of Reality

WINSTON WEATHERS

NIKOLAI GOGOL had an epic imagination which, though infected by the debilitating neurosis of his own personality, was nevertheless able to look out over human experience and to distill from the glance a marvelously coherent and universal picture of human reality. In *Dead Souls*, the first volume of a proposed trilogy, Gogol is at his most brilliant moment, and with swift and cunning and shrewd strokes of his brush, he draws before us life in much of its comedy and its tragedy; and though he has chosen a nineteenth-century Russian village and the Russian manners therein as the literal subject matter of his discourse, what he has to say about them is true beyond any national or temporal boundaries.

Russia is the literal setting of the story, but the universal setting is human reality; Chichikov, a Russian Collegiate Councillor, is the literal "hero" of the story, but it is Chichikov, the man who has grown bedeviled, who is the universal "hero" of the tale; the village of N— is the specific setting of these adventures, but it is any village in the world, or indeed, even more symbolic than that, it is the state of any society which has degenerated from a living identity into hellishness that is the setting. Gogol himself is aware that he is writing more than a comedy of manners or a social satire, for he frequently turns to the reader and asks some pertinent question, as he does in the twelfth chapter when he confronts the reader boldly and questions him, "Now isn't there a bit of you that is a Chichikov? Aren't you, dear reader, a little like him too?" (Guerney translation throughout)

Written in 1842, this rather simple tale—not simple in the succinct and rational manner of Voltaire's *Candide*, yet

far more simple than some of the great epics such as Dante's *Commedia*—this simple tale has existed for over one hundred years as a splendid example of literary craftsmanship and philosophical statement combined into an almost perfect piece of art. Though far less popular and less well known to English readers than *Paradise Lost* or Goethe's *Faust*, it is perhaps as meaningful and has a right to share place with the other great epics of the Western world.

It is rather obvious to any reader, of course, that *Dead Souls* is written on two levels of attitude at once. Overlying all is the great sense of comedy—that controlled hilarity and hysteria—the witty caricatures that make the novel so delightful. Yet underneath—sometimes quite overtly so, at all times implied—is the pathos and the tragedy, like a gray background against which the distortions and caricatures of the comedy occur.

There is comedy for instance when Gogol says of the landowner Plushkin, "Through no means and efforts could one ferret out what his dressing-gown had been concocted from; the sleeves and upper portions had become greasy and shiny to such a degree that they resembled the sort of Russian leather which is used for boots; dangling in the back were four flaps instead of two, out of which the cotton-wool quilting was actually crawling in tufts. About his neck, too, he had tied a something that one could not make out; it might have been a stocking, or a bandage, or an abdominal supporter, but nothing that one could possibly consider a cravat." Yet there is tragedy when Gogol asks of the same character, "And is it to such insignificance, such pettiness, such vileness that a man could sink?

Could a man change to such an extent? And does all this have any verisimilitude? . . . The fiery youth of the present would recoil in horror were you to show him a portrait of himself in his old age. . . . Sinister, fearsome is the old age that will come upon you farther along the way, and it never releases aught nor ever aught returns! . . . naught will you read upon the frigid, insensate features of inhuman old age."

To understand Gogol's use of the comic and tragic moods, however, we must have an understanding of a further dichotomy or at least gradation within the work. That is the division he makes between or within realities. First of all, there are two great classes of society portrayed in *Dead Souls*; this is necessarily so, of course, in that Gogol is drawing specifically a picture of nineteenth-century Russian society which was based on the two classes—the nobility and the serfs. Yet Gogol does more than merely make the distinction between the two; he uses the two classes as representations of what he considers degrees or types of reality. Within the framework of Russia itself, which is for Gogol the great embracing reality of life, we find the world of the serfs and the lower classes, a world of realism and tragedy and pathos. Yet we also find the world of the upper classes, a world of caricature and comedy and pseudo-reality. Nor is the distinction so abrupt and sharp, for Gogol, a master artist, has presented his degrees of reality, not so much as levels, but more as concentric circles. We find a great outer circle that is Russia, then the next inner circle of dead serfs, then the living serfs, then the landowners, and then the last small circle of the village bureaucrats.

It is out on the periphery of this geometrical conception, out on the outer circle that we see "the village of some landed proprietor or other . . . the tall narrow wooden belfry, or the old, sprawling, weather-beaten, wooden church itself. In the distance . . . through the leafage of

the trees . . . the red roof and white chimneys of the proprietor's house"; or perhaps in the outer circle of reality we see out on the road "water-wells, and strings of wagons, and drab villages, with samovars, countrywives, and the spry, bearded innkeeper running out of his stable-yard with a measure of oats in his hands; a wayfarer in bast sandals all worn through, plodding along to cover a distance of more than five hundred miles; little wretched towns, jerry-built, with miserable little shops, flour barrels, bast sandals, twisted loaves, and other such small wares." Here is the reality of Gogol's Russia, the reality of his world. But in the inner circle, what do we find? A static, lifeless pool of unreality. In describing the arrival of Chichikov we find that Chichikov himself was the "fair-to-middlin' sort . . . neither too stout nor too thin; you couldn't say he was old, but still he wasn't what you might call any too young either. His arrival created no stir whatever in the town of N— and was not coupled with any remarkable event. . . ." A totally neutral picture. Chichikov goes into a nameless tavern in a nameless village and is waited on by a server of such a sort that "it was downright impossible to make out what sort of face he had" in a place where "everything was the same as you would find anywhere." Totally nondescript, without identity. In between these extremes we find Gogol's gradations of realism; gradations from the sane outer perimeter of clear vision to the inner core of vague identities. And as we move from the outer circle to the inner circle, the comedy increases and the tragedy decreases in something of a paradoxical style, for in all that Gogol has to say it is evident that the source of all our woe is the mentality and tragic lack of values that the inner circle represents.

This then is a third characteristic of Gogol's epic manner—the Gogolian paradox. First we have the Gogolian comic manner, which is an overlay of the tragic.

Second, we have the Gogolian concept of reality which is a gradation process from the very liveliness of the dead serfs to the very deadliness of the living bureaucrats. And then the paradox of it all, the very paradox of the novel's title itself—*Dead Souls*, souls which we believe to be the dead serfs until it begins to dawn upon us that the really dead souls are the citizens of the village of N—: that what Gogol is calling comic, is in itself the tragic.

And we begin to understand the process of all Gogol's epic manner: the comedy, the lack of reality, the paradox all increase as we go toward the center of the circles. On the outer edge—the great passages dealing with Russia—we find no comedy, only reality, and no paradox. It is only at the center, in the village of N—, that we find the comedy, the illusion, the paradox. And why is this? Because the village of N— is Gogol's presentation of a little hell on earth compounded of the chaos of human lives, compounded of the very comedy, illusion, and paradox that we can bring our lives to by letting our souls die and become dead in the midst of a whole world of great, living realities. In other words, that is the reality of the inner circle—the lack of reality itself.

The village of N— is comparable to the Inferno of Dante, the Hell of *Paradise Lost*, the infernal city of Paris of Voltaire's *Candide*. And at the very center of the village of N— is the administrative office building, a very Pandemonium, here in a city of Dis. It is a hell on earth, created by human beings. It is, of course, beyond time and place. The village is archetypal. It is, after all is said and done, a state of mind or being, as all of Gogol's reality may well be.

It is into such a little hell on earth that Chichikov the novel's "hero," comes. Chichikov is as mysterious as a Satan but as obvious as an Everyman. In fact he is in the disguise of Everyman, neither too stout nor too thin, and indeed once was

an Everyman, but now has degenerated and has become a subman, one who has, as the result of inclination and environment and fate, as the result of poor parental advice and the exigencies of necessity, died within his soul and become a little devil on earth. Chichikov is a wanderer just as the devil usually is. He wanders through the reality of the world (Russia) searching out the little hells (the villages of N—) that man has created within that reality. It is around and within the little hells of the world that Chichikov knows he will find the dead souls—not the dead souls of serfs which he pretends to wish to buy—but the dead souls of the corrupt bureaucrats who will deal with him and play his evil game. On the literal level, of course, Chichikov really has come to the village in order to buy up dead serfs who are, legally, still alive as long as the current census is in effect. He wishes to buy such dead serfs for little or nothing in order that he may mortgage them for as much cash as if they were alive. It is strictly a business deal as everything in Chichikov's life is. And it happens in this case to be a rather successful business deal for him, though a limited one.

Chichikov conducts his business with one of the most interesting galleries of caricatures in world literature—the five caricatured landowners, created in something of a Dickens style. All of them—Manilov, Korobochka, Nozdrev, Sobakevich, and Plushkin—are masterpieces of exaggerated character. Each represents some particular evil, magnified into gigantic proportions, and made the sole characteristic of the personality involved. Manilov is officiousness and day-dreaming carried to unhealthy extremes; Korobochka is narrow-mindedness carried to stupid limits; Nozdrev is exaggeration and bullshiness carried to disastrous ends; Sobakevich is swindling and boorishness carried to evil consequences; and Plushkin is greed and miserliness carried to the state of pathos and despair. These

characters are only a circle removed from the innermost circle of Gogol's reality; they are not really the dead and lifeless personalities that the bureaucrats of the village are, but they are the next step to it. Each of the landowners is representative of an evil which can and does lead a man into the innermost circle, into the nameless region of hell on earth, into the deadness that the village is. The landowners at least have names; the bureaucrats of the inner-circle have no personal names at all.

It is from these landowners, of course, that Chichikov acquires dead souls, and the thesis is simple. The serfs represent the real and the living, even if the serfs happen to be buried, but the Devil Chichikov acquires them through the various evils which the landowners represent. That is to say, living human beings, by allowing some evil tendency within them to reach its exaggerated possibilities, will sell themselves as dead souls into the hands of the devil.

Chichikov's activities come to a rather abrupt halt, however, in the village of N— and for rather incongruous reasons. In most epics, of course, there is a presentation of an ideal and frequently a presentation of the quest for that ideal, and so it is we find an ideal within this epic—at least an ideal for Chichikov, and it is the ideal which eventually destroys his plans or at least limits them and drives him from the village. The governor's daughter represents the ideal and it is Chichikov's seeing her and admiring her that brings about his exodus.

The governor's daughter has a two-fold representational value in *Dead Souls*. On the one hand, she is representative—in the tradition of Robert Graves's *The White Goddess*—of the eternally good and spiritually beautiful that even a Chichikov cannot resist and which, in her own way, calls a halt to Chichikov's diabolical machinations in the affairs of hapless men. On the other hand, however, she is in the tradition of Eve, another

Mlle. Cunegonde of *Candide*, representing temporal and physical beauty which is forever detracting man from his true goal, is forever spoiling paradise for man even when he chances to find it. To the extent that Chichikov is Everyman, then the governor's daughter is the seductive feminine which, as a false goal, leads man from his potential success and happiness. To the extent that Chichikov is the Devil, the governor's daughter is that Beatrice-like symbol which appears on the scene to arrest evil and to display even before the Devil the irresistible charms of that which is participant in the eternally good.

Whichever feminine symbol she may be, however, the appearance of the governor's daughter initiates the series of events which lead to Chichikov's necessary abandonment of the village of N—. And here is another paradox. Chichikov is driven from the village not by the truth—no one really believes that he is buying up dead souls—but by a false story which has him trying to marry the governor's daughter and elope. Even the Devil, it seems, can be caught in the snares of human stupidity.

But Chichikov's forced exodus from the village of N— does not mean his defeat. He has gained many souls; he only surrenders the possibility of gaining any more in this particular place, at this particular time. Certainly Chichikov's evil is not abolished. His evil will go on with him, for evil in *Dead Souls*, just as it is in *Paradise Lost*, is a permissive evil and an eternal one. It can be limited, abated, confined, thwarted, but it can never be destroyed, and Chichikov's, or of the spirit of man-become-evil, rides on through the world in search of yet another village of N— where he may buy dead souls from dead souls.

Chichikov travels on down the highway, down the road. It is the road of life, of course, that wondrous avenue that Gogol lauds so much, and it is the wondrous avenue which we all travel, frequently with a Chichikov traveling along

beside us. It is the archetypal journey of our existence—that journey of life which Gogol tells us can be a wonderful thing for us, the activity of which may save us from drowning into spiritual apathy and moral lethargy; that journey of human endeavor, achievement, and complex adventure.

And where does this journey take place? The road that winds through Russia, and Russia is metaphorically, in this epic, the world of life, of reality—the opposite of death and illusion. It is reality, of course, that Gogol is discussing all through his novel. Gogol's cry, "Russia! Russia! I behold thee—" is more than a chauvinistic apostrophe; it is a salute and a cry to the reality of our very humanity, to that truth of things—good and bad—through which the highway of our mortal existence goes. And what sort of truth and reality is it? It is poor, scattered, bleak; all is exposed, desolate, and flat. Yet even in the dull panorama of human life there is something incomprehensible, some mysterious power that draws one into it. It is the mysterious power that Voltaire called "that ridiculous weakness" of mankind to keep on living. There is some great urge, as Gogol puts it, that keeps us involved in life, that makes us want to journey through the flat, barren geography of human life. "What is there in it?" he asks, "this song of thine?" And because of this urge to live—that mysterious awareness we have of our own possibilities—that great flat landscape of reality becomes "a refulgent wondrous horizon that the world knows naught of."

Yet Gogol knew that we can ignore the possibilities, that we can gradually succumb to the evils of the world and our own natures, that we can gradually die while still in our bodies and become dead souls, and that we can become less than Everyman, can become a scribbler of notes from underground, can become a very devil as Chichikov did, a devil which even the slight vision of eternal beauty cannot thwart and which will go on for-

ever down the road. And Gogol knew that Everyman by becoming a dead soul can find himself in a virtual hell on earth, a village of N—, regardless of place or century. *Dead Souls*, then, is a great moral statement on your journey and mine through reality, or at least on our condition within reality, our understanding of it. *Dead Souls* is almost a homily, a sermon on the state of evil in the world. Even the last question of the book, "Whither art thou soaring away to then, Russia?" is a posing of the problem which may face us all: Where is our world going, what is the nature of reality ahead, what is the future of man? Are we on our way to life or are we on our way to death? Shall we become a Chichikov or shall we retain our identity beyond his clutches? Will he take us in? He is with us, certainly. As Gogol said of another character, "He is everywhere in our midst, merely walking about in a coat of a different cut."

The novel—actually Gogol himself called it an epic poem—ends with Chichikov in his troika, accompanied by Se-lephan and Petrushka, the servants, riding down the highway and away. We are tempted to sympathize with Chichikov, the scoundrel, but Gogol warns us against that; he warns us not to take our fellow man too casually if he is evil, even if his evil is disguised in good-naturedness, decorum, and service. We must not accept Chichikov's evil just because we have an understanding of what made him evil. We must not accept him anymore than we accept Satan in *Paradise Lost*. Evil is evil, regardless of genesis.

Gogol apologizes for using such a scoundrel as his hero and for writing, not of the glory and goodness of mankind, but of man's too frequent debauchery and insipidness and maliciousness. But even in his apology, Gogol suggests we might do well to look upon the evil of the world once in awhile—in order that we may know it and avoid it. In fact, Gogol suggests Chichikov may be something like

an "instrument of God" who may have so aroused and frightened the decadent bureaucrats that they too will see the evil and strive to recover from it, may strive to regain life and to recover their souls.

Gogol always intended to continue his epic study of reality. He always intended to write a more optimistic novel in which Chichikov would rise above the confines of his own devilry and would come at last into a reality that was not a virtual hell and fringed with the tragedy of human suffering, but into a reality that possessed the possibility of the purgation of our animality and our restoration into a paradise of spiritual and ethical values. Gogol hoped to have Chichikov work his

way out of the inner circle and ride out of the comedy and illusion and paradox of so much of human experience—even as Gogol hoped all men would ride out of the comedy and paradox and illusion into the more serious perhaps, but more meaningful, circle of reality, the greater circle, the great outer circle.

But Gogol never wrote a sequel to *Dead Souls*. He, bedeviled in the reality of his times and in the unfortunate reality of his own personality—his great inherent sense of guilt and original sin—and bedeviled by the machinations of a religious fanatic, Gogol went mad and into death long before his dreams came true.

### Eduardo de Filippo

Last month's News and Ideas reported Thornton Wilder's recent choice of de Filippo as his favorite contemporary playwright, together with some notes on William Weaver's feature story about the dramatist who is "one of the best alive anywhere." A request to Mr. Wilder for further information brings the following tantalizing opinions:

"Looks like de Filippo is forever unEnglishable; three translations of *Filomena Marturano* have been doing the rounds of the New York managers. He's not even fully understandable to North Italians; when his company plays Rome or Milan they have to "facilitate" that Neapolitan dialect. But what a dramatist, and what an actor! Every cell of him pure theatre. As with all Italian dramatists since Pirandello, there's an occasional light mist of metaphysical jugglery, but Eduardo for the most part keeps it integral to the action."

This is quoted as a challenge to any reader of *College English*, or to any reader's colleague, to produce a suitable translation or article on this comparatively unknown artist.

# Linguistics in the Classroom

SUMNER IVES

ANYONE who has been reading periodicals for English teachers or who has been attending conventions of English teachers must be aware of the controversy over linguistics and its relevance to the teaching of composition. As one whose research is primarily in descriptive linguistics, but whose teaching includes at least one composition class each semester, I have a personal interest in the interaction of linguistics and the practical use of language. I am somewhat disturbed by what appears to be a conflict between linguists and teachers of writing when I can detect no valid reason for such a conflict.

I suspect, both from reading the exchanges and from listening to the discussions, that much of the disagreement comes from misunderstanding. I observe arguments which promote linguistics without showing an exact appreciation of the significance of its findings; I notice defences of positions which linguistics, properly understood, does not attack. Moreover, although many composition teachers have come to believe that traditional grammar is a very poor description of English structure, some of the more judicious have complained, rightly, that the arguments of the linguists have been largely negative, that they have given little to replace that which they have attacked. This, then, is the situation with which this paper deals.

In order to accomplish its purpose, the discussion must be both general and specific, for the usefulness of linguistics is two-fold. One contribution is a valid and useful theory of what language is and how it works. The other is a description of the specific forms and constructions which are used in a particular language for the expression of meaning.

In general academic usage, the term

linguist includes those who teach the language courses in an English or other modern language department. However, the criticisms of traditional grammar have come chiefly from those who have made particular study of descriptive or structural linguistics, and the counterattacks have been made against this group. In this discussion, therefore, linguistics means descriptive linguistics, and linguists are those who work in this branch of language study. In his study of language, the linguist uses the standard methods of observation and classification common to all systematic studies of human behavior and the natural world. In describing the structure of a language, he is guided by the forms of words and their characteristic patterns of use. His criteria of definition and classification are therefore very much the same as those of the anthropologist or the chemist.

The major aims of the linguist are the discovery of the principles true of all living languages and the accumulation of detailed and systematic descriptions of the phonology and the grammar of these languages. Both these major goals have relevance to promoting facility in the native language and to teaching the use of a second language. Hence, as a methodology of investigation, linguistics is one of the social sciences, but the nature of its subject matter and the application of its results give it primary association with the humanities. The study of the forms of language is a science; the proper and effective use of language is an art.

The difficulty which many persons trained in the humanities seem to have with linguistics is due primarily to our intellectual climate. Most of the notions which underlie our common vocabulary for talking about language are survivals from a pre-objective period of language

study. The words in our vocabulary reflect an orientation on language matters which is very different from that which is derived through direct observation of individual languages. When a non-linguist reads what a linguist has written about language, there is often a breakdown in the communication, even when familiar terms are used, for the non-linguist is often interpreting the discussion in a frame of reference which differs from that in which it was written. This difficulty is compounded when the linguist uses terms from the technical jargon of his field. Yet such a technical vocabulary is necessary and is no more exotic than those in other fields. Physicians, for example, no longer use such terms as "humorous" and "sanguine" in their medieval sense, for these terms reflect a theory of disease which they no longer hold.

The consequences of this misunderstanding, which is often greater than either party realizes, are most easily observed in the extrapolations from linguistics which persons without training in its methods attempt to make. Any statement in any field is only a partial expression; it must be interpreted within the restrictions imposed by the nature of what is talked about, by the context, and by all the assumptions, postulates, and qualifications which are part of the accumulated knowledge in the field. This does not mean that linguists talk only with each other, though they are as prone to this as anyone, but it does mean that the statements of linguists should be accepted and applied only to the extent that they are explicit, that conclusions should be drawn only within the limits of the primary statements and only about that aspect of the subject concerning which they are made. When, for example, a linguist uses stretches of actual speech as material for grammatical analysis, his purpose does not include the establishment of a standard dialect, and his results apply only to his sample.

Aside from this difficulty, which is concomitant to every major advance in fundamental knowledge, linguistics is not a hard subject. Its subject matter is all around us. Ordinary people have mastered and use quite easily all the forms, constructions, and sound patterns it deals with. Its results, whenever a particular language is described, can be checked by any native speaker who will believe what he observes and not what he has been taught to expect. And any native speaker who has the necessary perseverance and mental discipline can learn and use its methods to extend his conscious understanding of the forms and constructions of his own language.

But at the present time, direct provision for the development of an adequate theory of language and for the accumulation of knowledge about the actual constructions of English is seldom made in the training of English teachers. Virtually all their upper division and graduate courses are in literature. When language courses are required, and they are seldom taken unless required, they generally consist of reading more literature, this time in a stage of the language which is no longer current, or they consist primarily of tracing individual sound changes, with some attention to resulting changes in morphology, and some checking on etymologies. This language program undoubtedly has cultural value, but it has little direct bearing on the teaching of composition. It is possible for a student to go through such a program with excellent marks and yet remain basically ignorant of the nature of language as a socially directed activity, unaware of the difference yet interaction between a language and its written symbolization, blind to the operation of its grammatical devices, and unprepared even to read many of the basic publications which describe the current characteristics of his own language or to analyze that language for himself.

This has not been said in any spirit

of superiority or condemnation. It is the simple truth. Any blame is general. It is up to the linguists to relate their findings to the larger aims of education. But they have the same right to attention and trust as the zoologist, the political-scientist, or the specialist in the pastoral elegy. The problem is the familiar one of cultural lag. A solution will come only with time, careful explanations, and a decent regard for human feelings and fallibility on all sides.

Much of the misunderstanding about what the linguist does and says comes from his insistence on two of his basic principles and their corollaries. One of these is the primacy of speech as the language, with writing as a secondary and derivative manifestation of speech. The other is the dynamic, changing nature of language, with its corollaries about stability and standardization. Both principles are derived from studying languages as physically observable structures; neither is a threat to the basic aims of the composition course—namely, to teach students to write their own language as clearly and effectively as they can, and with full regard for the conventions of usage observable in the products of recognized masters.

In explaining his attention to speech, the linguist points out that all systems of writing are based on the prior existence of speech, that all alphabetic systems depend ultimately on the sound system of the language, even though, as in English, the correspondence between sound and spelling is very complex and difficult to describe. The linguist realizes that the writing system, even with its marks of punctuation, never quite symbolizes all the components which contribute to meaning in speech. He comes to see the teaching that English has five vowels as nonsense and the mother of error, and the designation of long and short vowels in English as little better. And he learns to dismiss such questions as whether English is a phonetic language as meaning-

less. These lessons may not have direct bearing on the teaching of good composition, but they are vital if one is to understand the relationship of writing to the language, of spelling to pronunciation, or of reading to speaking.

On the other hand, distinct from the alphabetic representation of words on paper, speaking and writing are different but interacting activities. They are not the same, do not follow all of the same conventions, and are not done for the same list of purposes. Neither is finally and fully determinative for the other. No competent linguist would suggest that the teacher of written English should accept in student writing all of the conventions and the same characteristics of style as are customary in speech, even that of the most cultivated. The notion that linguists make speech determinative for writing is one of the false extrapolations made by people who interpret the findings of linguistics without knowing what they mean. They are failing to distinguish between writing as a graphic representation of a linguistic expression (which is secondary to speech) and writing as a special kind of communicative activity (which differs in style and purpose from speech).

The fundamental reason why the linguist gives his primary attention to speech is the fact that only in speech does he find all the signals which convey information. For example, the two phrases, "a stone wall" and "a race horse," are not spoken with the same patterns of stress. In the first phrase, "stone" is functionally an adjective, just as "high" would be in the same place. In the second, "race" is functionally a part of a compound noun, in spite of the orthography, like "black-" in "blackberry." It is the difference in the patterns of stress which makes the grammar clear. With the grammatical importance of stress in mind, read the following sentences aloud and then parse "drinking" and "water" in all of them. (1) Our drinking water fortunately remained fresh. (2) Drinking water from

our canteens rather than from open streams kept us from getting dysentery. (3) Drinking water rather than wine made the boys healthy.

Another practical result of investigation into these "supra-segmental" characteristics of speech is the recognition of the relationship between pitch patterns and structural unity. In ordinary prose, the ends of statements and of most questions are marked by a quick rise in pitch, followed by a quick drop to a level below that of the bulk of the sentence. A sentence which has the word order of a statement can be made into a question by a quick rise of pitch at the end. When there is a quick rise and then a drop back to the basic level, a shift in constructions within a sentence is marked. These pitch signals mark the places where punctuation decisions are to be made if the speech is set down in writing. A student can often clarify his constructions and rectify his punctuation simply by reading his themes aloud, for he will generally find that an unEnglish construction cannot be read with the English supra-segmental patterns—what are popularly called intonation patterns—and he has used these since childhood.

For these reasons, any analysis of English grammar which is not based ultimately on the signals of speech is necessarily incomplete. The other basic principle which is sometimes misunderstood is corollary to the fact that language is a social institution with the same counteracting tendencies towards stability and adaptability as other social institutions.

A typical expression of the linguist's view is found on page 177 of W. D. Whitney's *Language and the Study of Languages*, published as long ago as 1867. "Language is an institution founded in man's social nature, wrought out for the satisfaction of his social wants; and hence, while individuals are the ultimate agents in the formation and modification of every word and every meaning of a word, it is still the community that makes

and changes its language."

The relevance which this principle has for the composition teacher is its bearing on the formation and continuity of the conventions which he should teach as part of the standard language. That dialect of English which we now call edited written English is the product of changes resulting from the interaction of individuals as agents of the community. The dialect whose modern development we teach originally had no discernible virtues as a language which made it superior to other local forms of English. Its selection for cultivation was almost surely the result of socio-economic factors. Nonetheless, its fortuitous origin does not invalidate its claim to superiority today. But these claims rest in part on the growth and refinement of special vocabularies, in part on the great store of literature which is written in it, in part to the social prestige which is granted to those who use it, and in part to the size and importance of the territory over which it is spread. These reasons are fully adequate to demand that it be taught as a school subject.

Yet, this standard English cannot be exactly defined, nor does it remain constantly the same, in spite of the factors which give it stability. No complete, definitive, and final dictionary of English usage can be made so long as English is in active use, although the list of disputed usages is never large at any one time. A teacher of writing simply has to maintain the same kind of contact with changes in his basic material as that maintained by doctors and lawyers.

A special problem in dealing with usage is the presence of shibboleths. So long as overt marks of social and educational status are considered useful by society, some of these will be linguistic. For example, the adequacy of one's education is often judged by his ability to spell, or by whether he splits infinitives, or by whether he says "eyether" or "eether." It is in the area of shibboleths that the

purist feels most authority, for he is usually their custodian. To the linguist, however, most of these have the status of myth, as the term is used in sociology. Nevertheless, a rather large part of one's acceptance in society is his adjustment to myths of this type. Hence, it is, I think, the duty of the school teacher to point out the current shibboleths, for they change, and to advise how much they are observed and by which people.

Language is thus a social institution. It has the same kind of stability and adaptability as other social institutions, from table manners to democratic government, and its conventions are just as obligatory while they last. The scholar should remember that the major purpose of language is not to preserve for the future, but to serve the exigencies of now. To ask for a static language makes just as much sense, and no more, as to ask for a static society. There are, of course, people who do this. To put the language in the hands of a self-appointed few is just as reasonable, and no more, as to put the regulation of government in the hands of a similarly appointed group. There are people who want to do this too.

These principles constitute the major elements in a theory of language which is valid and which should assist the composition teacher to deal more intelligently with his basic subject matter. The major tool which linguists can give to the teachers of composition is a true and adequate description of the forms and constructions which are used in English for the expression of grammatical meaning, in short, an English grammar. Such a grammar will retain some of the categories and their terms which are in traditional grammar, but its methods of classification and definition will be fundamentally different.

When we attempt to relate the terminology, with its implied classification, of traditional grammar to the actual forms of English and their behavior, at least four major defects appear. Some terms,

e.g., grammar, have more than one referent; some terms, e.g., passive voice and tense, have referents which are not, by their very nature, susceptible to sharp definition in English; some terms, e.g., adverb and pronoun, are in use without a genuine referent (the supposed referents of these terms lack identity as single classes or categories of items); finally, some terms, e.g., noun and verb, are identified, not by definitions, but by statements which may well be true, but which do not name the particularizing characteristics of the classes which the terms refer to.

In traditional grammar, an adverb is defined as a word which modifies a verb, adjective, or other adverb. However, the "adverbs" *quite* and *very* simply do not obey the same rules of syntax as the "adverbs" *usually* and *soon*, for *quite* and *very* do not modify verbs. Another false classification is that which includes *he* and *few* in the same category, for one is inflected and the other is not, one can be modified by *very* and the other cannot, and one has a noun antecedent and the other does not. It is true that both can act as subjects, but then, so can adjectives. The concept of tense in traditional grammar is complicated by the fact that verb phrases made with *will* are called a future tense, yet these phrases have the same formal characteristics as those made with *must* and other modal auxiliaries.

I am, admittedly, judging a grammatical description according to criteria of form and usefulness. To be valuable in teaching a language or in promoting facility in its use, a description of its grammar should isolate those classes about which statements need to be made. These statements may be rules for word order, for the formation of phrases, for derivational change, for functional change, for inflectional concord, and so on. There is obviously very little which one can say about word order which will be true of both *very* and *soon*, of both *he* and *few*.

A classification must select out and as-

sociate in identity a group of items which, so far as the purpose of the classification is concerned, are equivalent. These items must be, within the purpose for which the class is isolated, freely substitutable for each other. In defining this class, a property must be named which is tangible, which is present in all members of the class, and which is absent from all items not in the class. If this definition is part of a taxonomy, it must be one of a set. The definitions in a set must contrast with each other and must conjointly exhaust all items in the same division and level of analysis. These sets must each have a common factor which excludes members of other sets, and so on until the entire classification is complete. A properly developed taxonomy, therefore has the outward design of a genetic tree.

In framing definitions, one must enumerate a list of attributes generally agreed upon, or one must name one or more characteristics whose presence or absence can be verified by direct observation. Many of the terms in literary criticism, e.g., "romanticism," rest upon agreement to associate the term with a list of attributes. Other terms, such as those in the taxonomy of botany, are defined by direct appeal to nature. Anyone who has good eyesight and the proper instruments can count the cotyledons in a seed. One may have more trouble with "hirsute" and "pubescent," but the degree of fuzziness which they denote can be easily distinguished after a little experience. Since Linnaeus, the botanists have had a way to bring order to the apparently limitless variety of nature; they have had a classification system for what is, to the layman, infinite discreteness. The objective of the descriptive grammarian is to do for the forms of individual languages what the botanist has done for plant life.

In popular usage, grammar is often considered to be a crystallization of human logic, a set of concepts and distinctions in terms of which all languages should be described, a set of formal char-

acteristics and correspondences to which all languages should conform. In this view, which is that implied in some recent articles and found in most older books on language, the most convenient expression of grammar is one based on Latin. When it was shown that a knowledge of traditional grammar had little correlation with an ability to use English correctly and effectively, the result was a belief that grammar need not be studied as a prerequisite to training in composition. This view, is, I think, wrong. I think that, on the contrary, an adequate knowledge of the forms of English and of the rules for their use should be a very valuable pre-requisite to instruction in composition. Arguments based on current experience are irrelevant, for the grammar has not been English grammar.

Now the linguist studies a language by analyzing, in turn, its levels of complexity. These correspond only roughly to the levels indicated by the common terms phonology, morphology, and syntax. In this division into levels, that which deals with the combination of the smallest meaningful units into the largest self-sufficient and independent constructions is grammar. These smallest meaningful units are called morphemes. They may be affixes like *-ness*, *-ed*, and *non-*; they may be words like *kind*, *his*, and *the*; they may be stress patterns like those which make a word like *subject* into a noun or into a verb. Every utterance consists of segmental morphemes, like words, stems, and affixes, and of supra-segmental morphemes, which include what the layman means by intonation. Grammar classifies these morphemes into groups according to similarities of form and grammatical meaning. It includes the rules by which morphemes are combined into constructions and the rules governing the formation of still larger constructions until the ultimate limit of strict structural relationship has been reached. The units at the limit of strict structural relationship are sentences.

Grammar as conformity to the conventions of the standard dialect becomes a matter of comparative grammar. The dialects of English which comprise vulgate English all have grammars, as the term is defined in the preceding paragraph, but the rules and forms of these grammars differ in some ways from those of the standard dialect. The teaching problem is the correlation of equivalent expressions and the substitution of standard for non-standard forms and constructions. The only inherent source of confusion is the presentation by the teacher of conventions which differ from those which the student observes in his academic reading.

A more serious cause for confusion is a failure to distinguish between grammar and style. The rules which govern the combination of morphemes into sentences are imposed on the individual; the words and constructions which he uses, out of those which conform to the rules, are matters of choice. This area of language choice is style, or rhetoric. For example, after "individual," just above, I could have used a period or a semicolon, for both show the boundary between structurally complete units. But I could not have used either mark before that word, for it is grammatically related to those which immediately precede. Such matters as the selection of words and constructions, the length of sentences and their complexity, and the organization of the total expression are matters of style. Such matters as consistency in parallel structure, reference of pronouns, and agreement of subject and verb are matters of grammar. These matters of grammar are finite; they can be discovered and described.

An example of confusion arising from a failure to make this distinction clear is the trouble students have with "sentence recognition." The customary definition of the sentence as the verbal expression of a complete thought does not, by itself, separate the sentence from the paragraph or from larger sections which are sup-

posed to have unity. As the term is applied in most handbook discussions of punctuation, it designates a unit in style but not necessarily in grammar. The crucial information—that there is an identifiable unit in grammar, that, in connected prose, the juxtapositions of these units must be marked, and that one of the ways to make these juxtapositions is with a period—does not follow from the traditional definition.

In English structure, the sentence, the independent unit in connected discourse, has the following characteristics: (1) it must contain at least one finite verb or verb phrase; (2) all words must be structurally related; (3) it must not, as a unit, have a grammatical function in a larger construction. There are three types of such units in English. In the statement, the subject normally precedes the verb, unless it begins with a word of the class of "never." In the question, the subject is normally inserted inside the verb phrase. (If the verb is not a phrase, it is made into one with a form of "do.") In the request, there is no subject. The verb may come first, or it may be preceded by a word to get attention or to show courtesy.

There are two other types of constructions which are marked by end punctuation or intonation. One is the response; the other is the exclamation. Both of these constructions get their "completeness" from something which has been said or is physically close enough to be pointed out by a gesture. Thus, we can use a construction which is structurally not a sentence when we reply to a question, stated or implied, or when we react to an automobile accident, or when we point to something and comment on it.

The most common error in student themes is the failure to mark the juxtapositions of structurally complete units, or the habit of marking as sentences groups of words which are not structurally units. But difficulty with "sentence recognition" can be virtually eliminated

by teaching what is in the preceding paragraphs, listing the devices for marking the juxtapositions, and giving the following suggestions. At the beginning of a sentence, structural relationship points forward; at the end it points backward. If the student reads what he has written, aloud and phrase by phrase, he can detect the point where there is a break, where the shift from backward to forward relationship occurs. "Sentence fragments" ordinarily result from one of two causes. One is the insertion of an end sign where no structural end exists; the other is the failure to keep the structural pattern clear enough so that a structural unit can be isolated. In this case, a break in communication will almost surely be noticed. It has been my experience that native speakers of English can determine the presence or absence of grammatical relationship even when they cannot give a name to the type which exists.

In so far as their academic functions are concerned, linguists and composition teachers are related in somewhat the same way as botanists and gardeners are related in raising plants. Their duties do not conflict; they complement. The botanist identifies plants, groups them in families, analyzes their physiology, and observes the ecological factors which promote or retard growth. The gardener uses such information and adds to it his knowledge of the virtues of different fertilizers and methods of cultivation. If he has good soil and healthy stock, he may get good results regardless of how little he knows. But if his soil is not good, his stock is poor, or his experience is little, there is much he can learn from the botanist, although the botanist cannot teach him all that he needs to know. There is, of course,

nothing to prevent the botanist from becoming a gardener or to keep the gardener from gaining through experience a great deal of useful but uncoordinated knowledge.

What this means is that the students whose environment has provided them with actual use of good English are likely to do well whether their teacher knows much about language or not. On the other hand, in so far as the students do not have these habits, the teacher will find useful what the linguist has to say. Even if he does not have this preparation for formal and systematic teaching, he may still get acceptable results with some students by requiring practice, making corrections, and insisting on revision, provided he is himself a reasonably competent craftsman.

I should confess, nay insist, that linguistics simply gives the teacher additional or more effective tools and a better understanding of what he is working with. Any improvement he makes in his knowledge of language, any details he learns about the actual forms and constructions of English, will make him a more expert instructor. But at the present time, although linguists know and can teach information which is more accurate than the traditional notions, they still have much to learn about the details of English, and some of what they have learned is not ready for publication. Moreover, the field itself does not cover all the things that the composition teacher needs to know. There is still no royal road to good writing, no magic method that will turn out skilled writers, and neither linguistics nor any other field is likely to provide one.

# Round Table

## THE HUMANITIES COURSE AT MORGAN STATE COLLEGE

NICK AARON FORD

At the 1954 NCTE convention, a question arose concerning a possible substitute for the traditional literary types course required of sophomores by most colleges and universities. Among possible alternatives I suggested an integrated course in the humanities which would cover literature, philosophy, music, the plastic arts, and the modern dance. I pointed out that Morgan State, a liberal arts college with an enrollment of approximately 2,000 students, had inaugurated such a program and was pleased with its possibilities. Since several department heads expressed skepticism that such a course could be successful, I propose to describe the course and the favorable reaction of students and teachers to it.

The pilot course, which extended through four semesters, was succeeded in the fall of 1954 by a regular course yielding ten semester hours credit and required of all sophomores. The general objective was stated in the syllabus as follows:

To make the student an articulate member of the intellectual community, interested in the ideas and art forms reflective of the culture of Western civilization; aware of the personal, social, and artistic value of that culture; and constantly alert and receptive to opportunities to improve and enlarge his experience in the humanities.

Among the specific objectives were the following: (1) to acquaint students with forms, themes, and movements in the humanities; (2) to develop a keen sense of the relationship between cultural movements and historical facts; (3) to help students acquire oral, auditory, and visual techniques for evaluating form, structure, methods, and media of literature, painting, sculpture, music, the dance, and the combined arts.

In May, 1955, a questionnaire was sent to 278 students and teachers, who had participated in the experience for two semesters, requesting them to make a candid evaluation of the course without signing their names. According to the considered

judgment of the teachers, the major problems that prevented maximum success during the first year were: (1) use of too many separate texts that had to be purchased by the student, (2) too much material for the time allotted, (3) unevenness of the formal lectures (sometimes too scholarly and sometimes too "thin"), (4) inability of the average student to take satisfactory notes on readings and on formal lectures. Problems that were mentioned most often by students were: (1) too much assigned reading, (2) too many separate textbooks, (3) frequent introduction of new materials before the old had been thoroughly grasped, (4) teacher's tendency to sacrifice student participation in order to achieve a wider coverage of materials, (5) covering too much material superficially rather than concentrating on a smaller coverage in a more thorough manner, (6) not enough attention to contemporary culture, (7) frequent lack of satisfactory "bridges" between different arts and different periods.

But despite the problems, 19% of the students ranked the Humanities course as excellent in its ability to hold their interest, in comparison to their other courses, 48% as good, 26% as average, and 7% as poor. When asked to list the factors that in their opinion contributed greatly to the educational effectiveness of the course, 72.8% listed "the integrated method which shows relationships among the various types of creative experiences (literature, art, music, the dance)," 71% chose "the audio-visual demonstrations such as the playing of musical records, the showing of slides of the fine arts, and the presentation of dance demonstrations," 47% selected "the large amount and variety of subject matter covered," 44.5% voted for "the formal lectures which give helpful background for the introduction of new units of instruction," and 25.5% were impressed by "the frequent tests and examinations."

Analysis of student reactions according to major fields of study reveals the following information: Political Science majors (100%) led all the rest in giving the course a superior rating in its ability to create and hold student interest. Other majors concurred in the following order: Music 90%, English 85%, Chemistry 77%, Modern Languages 76%, Science Education 67%, Biology 67%, Mathematics 67%, Sociology 60%, Economics and Business Administration 60%, History 57%, Physical Education 50%, Home Economics 25%, and Psychology 20%. The following majors rated the course as poor in its interest-holding power: Psychology 40%, Science Education 33%, Sociology 13%, and Economics and Business Administration 5%.

Although many students complained that preparation of assignments for this course

consumed a larger proportion of their time than was required by any combination of courses yielding a similar amount of credit, when they were asked whether or not they would prefer a combination of three separate courses in the humanities area (World Literature 6 hrs., Music Appreciation 2 hrs., and Art Appreciation 2 hrs.) as a substitute for the ten-hour integrated Humanities 101-102, only 20.8% replied in the affirmative. The other 79.2% preferred the integrated course despite its rigorous requirements and its "growing pains."

Although the course is too new to merit anything but a tentative evaluation, it is old enough to have won enthusiastic praise from students and teachers alike and to give promise of a valuable contribution to the general education program at Morgan State College.

## THE CLASSICS AND THE CLASSROOM

HAROLD OREL

Strindberg's dyspepsia produced at least one popular sentiment: "Literature is printed nonsense." Its popularity lies among the sophomores; or so I sometimes believe. Those, at any rate, who have been trapped by the unreasonable demands of the typical liberal arts program of a large university, and who must take a second year of English. "I've covered all this before," a 220-pound Engineering student told me. And the gorgeous redhead refused to study English literature. "I learned it in high school," she said. "It's just Chaucer and Shakespeare all over again, isn't it?"

For the needs of such undergraduates, a new—perhaps overstuffed—course has come into being. Some universities call it "Masterpieces of Western Literature," others refer to it (misleadingly) as "World Literature." It serves as an optional alternative to "those birds, Keats and Shelley, and the other one, Col'ridge." In the space of a single year these masterpieces are dished up, piping hot, almost scandalously scrambled: *The Odyssey*, selections from the *Old Testament*, several medieval romances, Dante's *Inferno*, a number of Greek, English, French, Russian, and American plays, and any number of great poems. The harried in-

structor urges his students to make the most of time, and for those who are still with him as he catapults toward the month of June, he will even offer, as a bonus, *Crime and Punishment*.

The trouble with such a program is not its ambitious scope, which surely is commendable; if one intends to read the classics, he should read a great many of them. T. S. Eliot's dictum, that we know more than the ancients because the ancients are what we know, reminds us (when taken seriously) that not all of us know the ancients well enough. No concept could be more virtuous than that students at an American university want and need to know something about the central documents of western culture, that they should strengthen their historical and aesthetic sensibilities. A well-taught year can certainly inform them that they do not know as much as many Greeks and Jews of the pre-Christian era and men and women of the Middle Ages; that abstractions such as "truth," "beauty," and "God" have been real presences in the lives of entire nations, and may be so again; and that, in the mind-stultifying world of the popular arts, our ignorance is our shame.

In practical terms, however, the course must be taught by human beings, and its materials assimilated by teen-agers. The students, for the most part, will never again undertake a systematic study of the classics; this is their lone opportunity to learn how literature can enrich their lives. The problem in teaching is, simply, how to unify the disparate elements of the course. To present a dozen masterpieces as twelve discrete units is to invite chaos, to give even the most sensitive student an impression that the particular works he is reading have been chosen at random, and have little or nothing in common. He should be shown the points of similarity between great works; the differences are obvious enough. And (sad truth) he must be shown these similarities by an instructor who has been trained in graduate seminars to analyze homogeneous bodies of written material rather than individual works which represent tremendously different literary traditions. For both instructor and student the course can be a real education: in the words of Thomas Fuller, "Teaching of others teacheth the teacher."

At the University of Maryland such a course and such a problem exist. The methods for solving the problem are (I believe wisely) left up to the individual members of the staff who may draw on individual funds of knowledge. At first I thought I had the solution: I would treat the most salient aspect of each great work. Thus, if Homer stands for the epic tradition, I would consider the conventions of that tradition, the invocation to the Muse of poetry, beginning in the middle of things, the familiarity of the material, the similes and epithets, the celestial machinery. For the Old Testament, I would review the stories one by one, using standard commentaries to enable me to point out the significance of historical or geographical allusions; I might mention, too, what Milton did with the story of Adam and Eve, and Dryden with Absalom and Achitophel. I could riot in the folkloristic elements of Herodotus, comment on the crocodile who wept crocodile tears, spend time on the account of Egypt's customs and history in Book II. And if Dante walked through Hell, well, then, I would walk with him, circle by circle and malbowge by malbowge, see what he sees, re-

create every emotion, understand the reason for every punishment for every sin. No vagueness here. This is Hell, and Dante, poet of the plastic imagination (by now the source of the phrase has been forgotten), knew how to describe it.

Unfortunately, I had not learned how to teach Dante, or Herodotus, or the Old Testament, or Homer. The students, busy picking up quantities of miscellaneous knowledge, intent on writing notes for the inevitable Day of Reckoning, had been painfully sincere. Their faces, when they did not reveal boredom, seemed respectful enough: after all, this was Knowledge, and better to have it shoveled at one than to see it stingily measured by a time-serving professor. Everyone was helpful; when I wrongly identified a character in the *Aeneid*, a four-year Latin student would ask a sympathetic question; my misunderstanding of the Passover was gently forgiven. There were so many more pages to cover.

The late F. O. Matthiessen liked to say that the best critic is the man who combines all approaches to literature, the Freudian, the Marxist, the historical, the aesthetic, the anthropological, and all the others, in order to create a kind of Grand View. This critic should be willing to examine the findings of the new social sciences in the hopes that his understanding of a particular work of art may become more profound. The Emersonian dogma that Man is priest, and scholar, and statesman, and producer, and soldier, serves to rescore the point: every book has an author behind it, and the more we know about Man, the better able we are to appreciate Man's works. But, interpreted wrongly, the doctrine has a soft and squishy center, and its worst danger lies in its near-success, in the complacency with which its victims accept a great deal of miscellaneous information as Culture. A net can be flung so wide it will catch the smallest minnow at the same time it lets the finest marlin go. The student has not paid his money to learn the thousand ways in which Great Books can be studied; he wants the very thing that Matthiessen wanted in a critic—a point of view. The teacher must show the student a well-built, plausible-looking house; he should be wary of the possibility that he has started to peddle lumber.

My problem was partially solved when *The Persian Wars* was dropped from the Maryland curriculum as too long to teach within the limited time available. Herodotus had been particularly difficult. I had tried parroting *The Golden Bough*, and when that proved unsuccessful, had traced the tragic concept of history down to Gibbon; and, still unable to fit this new approach in with my lecture notes on the other classics, I finally reconsidered what I wanted to do with the classics.

More than anything else, I suppose, I wanted to communicate enthusiasm for good writing. Such excitement does not mean a contempt for details. The student who renders Nausicaa on an examination as "Nauceous" still ought to have his knuckles rapped, and the identification of Lethe as "an old Italian sinner who winds up in the tombs of the heretics" is worthy of its own special damnation. But I had more information than I needed, or, more precisely, I was dispensing more information than the students needed. I had failed to unify my ideas into a point of view. The classics, treated in this order, did not have a peculiar and unshakeable logic obvious even to the football player sunning himself in the far corner. Treated in some other order, they might become fun for the reader, seem universal, mature, and about deeply held convictions. Or treated from some other approach.

"No pleasure," Montaigne once said, "is fully delightful without communication, and no delight absolute except imparted." He might have been speaking of literature. I finally tried to share my pleasures by the simple expedient of concentrating on their heroes and heroines. Ulysses, after all, had been exalted by Pallas Athene, Nestor, Menelaos, Penelope, and even the greedy wooers, as an example worthy for Telemachus to follow. The ethical and moral values of a particular hero like Abraham or Moses might easily be treated in a month's time. Roland and Oliver were gentlemen who went to war. Dante, almost without being aware of how much he revealed, presented himself as the hero. Every classic in the course, in short, had its *Übermensch*.

The cant which decries hero-worship as "un-democratic" resists the facts of human life. Carlyle testified to the eternality of the

process: "Hero-worship exists, has existed, and will forever exist, universally among mankind." Young Americans know of Einstein, Schweitzer, the movie stars who seem to become what they impersonate, Eisenhower, MacArthur, golfers who transcend crippling pain and swimmers who seek new channels to conquer; their eyes glisten when Everest is described as a mountain to be conquered because "it is there"; they read the newsweeklies for the sake of the man of the week, or month, or year. Why shouldn't they read about the heroes of earlier ages? Such tales satisfy a genuine interest in the superman, and they are, after all, literature.

Immediately obvious is the fact that they differ; that their characterizations depend on different ways of looking at life. When Ulysses suspects the motives of Calypso (who has offered to teach him how to build a raft which will help him to escape from Ogygia and, of course, herself), as well as those of Leucothea (who has offered him a "veil imperishable" to save him from the raging sea), his distrust testifies to his cunning, and cunning is a virtue highly prized by a primitive people. Ulysses' skill at rhetoric—for example, the way in which he mingles appeals to Nausicaa's self-vanity, religious faith, admiration of men who have traveled widely, desire to marry well, family pride, and sense of compassion for a suffering stranger, all while standing before her "like a mountain lion bred"—is another of the reasons why he should be honored. Other reasons include his magnificent courage, his sense of loyalty, his frankness in self-evaluation, his willingness to honor minstrels, who are divinely inspired.

With him, compare Joseph: a hero who begins life as a tale-bearer, the favorite son, something of a dandy, unpleasantly arrogant toward his brothers. Later he becomes a better man, but he must first undergo imprisonment for an unjust charge. He is the hero-executive, a diviner of dreams, a generous forgiver. His death brings promise of even better things for his people. "I die," he said, "and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land which he swore to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob."

And with Joseph, compare Aucassin, the lover of the French romance, a man in whom the spiritual and the sensual have

become confounded. Aucassin must love Nicolette forever, lament in her absence, cry that he will kill himself if she dishonor him. His rigidly stratified mind tries to ignore the gross realities of peasant life and the disturbing possibilities of the afterlife. He is charming, somewhat like a much-loved, ornately carved chess piece, but stiff, or not so much stiff as another kind of hero.

Finally, consider Dante, the learned, proud, and passionate Florentine, the Catholic superman. He has visited Hell, observed carefully, and returned; he warns his readers that salvation awaits the holy and grisly damnation the sinner. The hero has his own hero, Virgil; his own heroine, Beatrice; he elevates his private dream to a universal truth. He weeps for the violated dignity of men's bodies; swoons for pity at the story of Paolo and Francesca da Rimini; places a tender hand upon the face of his teacher, Brunetto Latini; but his faith in God's wisdom and omnipotence never wavers. For Dante the true hero is the Christian who acknowledges his helplessness without grace, and who submits to the necessity of seeking salvation, and Dante is the hero.

Classics, considered as the stories of men and women who perform extraordinary feats and who stand for entire cultures, have a three-fold value. They restore man to the center of the universe, dynamize him, make his actions big. They excite the students, who can see a line of development from one book to the next. They help the instructor to use only pertinent data, and to

eliminate other data.

I record this as a record of a problem that I have faced, but do not advance my solution as one applicable to all who teach this course. The problem of unifying course materials can be solved in many different ways, and this is only one such way. Moreover, the personality of an instructor—which excites or bores a class to tears—is an Act of God, over which neither students nor departmental chairmen have much control. But "world literature" provides us all with the opportunity to convince the Opposition Party, the vast majority, that good books are worth reading even during the harrowing years of business affairs and the raising of children. That opportunity will be neglected if each classic is treated as a closed, separate system of thought; if a time period for the treatment of Unit A isolates us from the consideration of Unit B, which comes at a later period in the semester.

Those who tear up their lecture notes at the end of each academic year are always learning because they must begin fresh the next year. Those who do not adopt methods so drastic may still benefit from a re-examination, each semester, of the common characteristics of the classics they are about to teach. We can all benefit from a little more excitement: shall we call it fun? Strindberg's complaint did not prevent the dramatist from writing literature; nor should the maxim's popularity among sophomores prevent us from combatting it.

## Ars et Grammatica

Poetry is  
Quicker than prose,  
Which is thicker.  
Poetry's infinitive (to be),  
And if adverbial  
Is here and now,  
Prose then  
And there and how.  
Poetry is why: not the  
Question but the answer  
Before the question.

CONSTANCE HUNTING

# Current English Forum

CONDUCTED BY THE NCTE COMMITTEE ON CURRENT ENGLISH USAGE

MARGARET M. BRYANT, *Chairman*

## TRY AND COME

Q. Is the sentence "Try and come tomorrow" acceptable English? (R. B. G.)

A. Although in America there is some prejudice against *try and* in such a sentence, the idiom has been used since the seventeenth century by such literati as Milton, Coleridge, Lamb, Thackeray, George Eliot, and Arnold and continues to be used by professors, doctors, commentators, and like professionals, not to mention the ordinary person. *Webster's New International* (2nd ed.) accepts the expression as Standard English. The more careful writer may prefer *try* followed by the infinitive, but you will no doubt encounter "*Try and do your best*" as often as "*Try to do your best*," for it is good Standard English on the informal level. Other verbs that follow this same pattern are *go*, *send*, and *come*: "*Go and get one*"; "*Send and get one*"; "*Come and get your book*." (M. M. B.)

## KIND OF

Q. I often hear *kind of a* instead of *kind of* in sentences like "I want that kind of a dress." Which is preferable? Explain the uses of *kind of*. (M. C. Q.)

A. The use of *kind of* in expressions like "in an open, frank *kind of* way" and "Is this the *kind of* book that you like?" gave the feeling that *kind of* was an adjective qualifying the following noun. This feeling led to the use of *all kind of*, *other kind of*, *these (those) kind of*, *this (that) kind of*. In formal English the demonstrative or other word modifying *kind* is in the singular: "*This (That) kind of* picture is good." The plural forms *these* and *those*, however, frequently occur where a plural noun follows the *of*: "*These (Those) kind of* cars have their use." This usage is colloquial.

The adverbial *kind of*, meaning "rather; somewhat; to some extent; in a way," arose

out of the adjectival use: "It is not late, but I feel *kind of* tired." This usage is also colloquial.

In formal English when *kind of* is employed to express a class, it should not be followed by *a* or *an*: "It is that *kind of* (not *kind of a*) book." *Kind of a (an)* is colloquial. What is true of *kind of (a, an)* applies to *sort of (a, an)*. There is little difference in the two. (M. M. B.)

## THE DOUBLE POSSESSIVE

Q. Is the double possessive used in good English? (M. P. S.)

A. The *-s*-form and the *of*-form of the possessive are frequently joined as in "a friend *of mine*" and "a friend *of Jane's*," called the "double possessive." It occurs with pronouns and with nouns referring to persons. However, if the noun has an *-s* plural, the double possessive may be confusing in speech, since we cannot distinguish between "friend of the mayor's" and "friend of the mayors'"; hence in talking we tend to restrict the double possessive to singular names. In writing, however, whether one uses "friend of the mayor," "friend of the mayor's," or "mayor's friend" depends upon the euphony of the sentence. Whichever sounds better is preferable. One should also remember that "a picture of the mayor" refers to his likeness and "a picture of the mayor's" means a picture belonging to him.

It is interesting to note that the double possessive rarely occurs when the definite article *the* modifies the noun "possessed": "*A car of Fred Streater's*," but "*The car of Fred Streater*." It often occurs, however, after the demonstratives *this*, *that*, *these*, and *those*: "*This (That) book of Hazel's*"; "*These (Those) lamps of Mother's are forever in the way*." This construction has been in the language for a long time and holds a respectable place. (M. M. B.)

## TYPE-COMPOUNDS

There are two different *type*-constructions, and their status is by no means equal. We have all become accustomed to the noun-plus-*type* construction—the tank-*type* vacuum cleaner, the floor-*type* fan, and perhaps even the capacitor-*type* induction motor. The “Yale cylindrical, key-in-the-knob *type*, lock” is interesting for its irregular comma, apparently intended to indicate that *type* is part of the compound; in speech we use an intonation to make this clear. Compounds of a noun plus *type* are fairly common in other fields as well: in science (“the new UNIVAC-*type* computer”), in the newspaper (“ivy-*type* pelargoniums for trellising”), and elsewhere. Nor is this construction new. For instance, an art critic, writing in *The International Studio* for Feb. 1923, labeled one illustration a “full-length Lansdowne *type* portrait.”

The combination of an adjective with *type* is a somewhat different matter. Our reaction to Abe Burrows’ intentionally vulgar “high-*type* girl” confirms this. Advertising has contributed to the familiarity of this construction, from Firestone’s “Non-Skid Hi-*Type*” tires, advertised in the *Literary Digest* in Mar. 1927, to Swift’s “dry-*type* dog food” today. The extreme is reached when the adjective is not even descriptive; I have bought wax “For All *Type* Floors,” have used a lubricant for “similar *type* nozzles,” and have eaten at a rather elegant restaurant where the menu warned: “Cheese-cake: 25¢ additional on both *type* dinner [*sic*].”

What do these expressions replace? Some of them compress longer phrases: a computer similar to UNIVAC, pelargoniums of the ivy *type*; others may be substitutes for such phrases or may expand a simple adjective or noun adjunct: a floor fan, dry dog food. Many of them differ from the corresponding expressions in more formal English only by omitting *of*: all *types* of floors, a high *type* of girl.

Since compression is necessary in effective advertising and to a degree in journalism, we can see a justification for some of these constructions. There is also sometimes

a distinction in meaning. “Evelyn Waugh is a witty-*type* writer” may have a touch of ironic deprecation that “witty *type* of writer” does not. For *type*-compounds usually suggest only similarity to the *type* or the possession of only one or two characteristics of the descriptive item. But the use of *type* rather than *kind* or *sort* leads to the suspicion that we often have here, as in much pseudo-scientific jargon, an attempt to masquerade approximation behind a false show of precision.

The increasing use of compounds as noun-modifiers (for example, “the Labor Day traffic accident prediction”) has frequently been pointed out. *Type*-compounds are no doubt part of this tendency. And it is worth noting that a similar expression with *manner*, and frequently without *of*, was common in earlier English: “what manner times” (Fairfax), “no manner working of the spirit” (Tyndale); and at an even earlier period *kin* was used very much as *type* is today: “He shall telle yow what kynne tidynges that he hathe browte” (*Gesta Romanorum*).

There is, in fact, nothing about “high-*type* girl” or “floor-*type* fan” that is contrary to the grammatical structure of English. If the question of grammar is disposed of, we are left with considerations of usage and rhetoric, or we might say, of the company these compounds keep and of the force they put into or take away from speech and writing. The examples given suggest that these expressions are commonest in advertising and journalism and in vulgar speech. They further suggest that the noun compound has a somewhat higher standing than the adjective compound. But both are moving into more formal fields, as these quotations show: “A powerful new *type* electronic computer” is from a well-written scientific article in a university bulletin, and “Which *type* contract do you want?” is from a letter signed by the chairman of an English department. On the other hand, a casual examination of various recent publications shows that the rival expressions *type of*, *of the . . . type*, are not losing ground very rapidly.

DONALD A. BIRD

UCLA

# Letter to a Contributor

## And You, Mr. Bateson, Call Me Muddled!

Sir:

Your article damages not at all the principles I erected in my critique of your definition of literary sources. Nor does it alter a whit my reading of your position; for, as your article amounts to no more than an extension of the lines already laid down (in *Scrutiny*, in *Essays in Criticism*, and elsewhere), it merely repeats what was amply clear to me. What was clear to me is that your view of literary criticism and history is blurred, and that your definition of literary sources is muddled.

You are quick to score my un-muddledness of your muddles (and believe me, I mean MUDDLES); I rush, you say, to critical conclusions. "*Festina lente*, O camerado." You score me for not being clear about your distinction between literary history and criticism, albeit you add, "I must admit I was not clear about it myself in 1935." In "The Role of the Literary Historian" (in your excellent *English Poetry*, 1950) you make a complete reversal of your 1935 views on the relation of literary history to criticism; so perhaps I may be permitted to perfect my "Scholar's Net" by revising a single point in it, and especially as it amounts to only a correction in the phrasing. (It's that "contradiction" you spot, for which I thank you.) I object to your not permitting me a single error, while permitting yourself to make quite a few. *FitzGerald*, which I "misspelled," is likely the proper or preferred spelling; but my *New World Dictionary* has it—under *FitzGerald*, Edward—"also written *Fitzgerald*."

You assert that "facts are (or ought to be) sacred"; but how sacred are your own facts, *O camerado*?—You misrepresent Kipling's Dick Helder as "standing on the Embankment," whereas in fact "He was *leaning over* the Embankment wall, watching the rush of the Thames through the arches of Westminster Bridge" (*The Light That*

*Failed*, 1922, p. 57). You misrepresent me by your "hit-or-miss methods"—I did not locate Dick on Westminster Bridge. "At Westminster Bridge he *leans over the Embankment wall*. . . . And now on the bank of the river here is Dick." I said "*he doesn't cross the bridge*"—meant in the sense of "Dick as artist isn't going to get anywhere." Nor do I blame Dick for looking down from the Embankment, rather it is for "literally looking down on his public." (Notice the subtlety of that phrasing!) I did not say that Dick *literally* crosses the bridge, however. You claim that Dick's "moment of insight came some considerable time after the scene quoted," but that reading depends on what you mean by "insight." The insight I mean is the one I defined in my essay; it occurs exactly where I said it occurs (on p. 58), immediately after the image of the blood-red wafer (p. 58). I agree that Kipling's novel is not a series of interlocking symbols, but I didn't say it was.

Your strategy, sir, is to undermine the authenticity of my scrutiny of your literary-source propositions by showing me up first of all as an unreliable reader of Kipling's novel. "After that I suppose a lesser Englishman should not complain if he too has been misunderstood or misinterpreted." But this "front" to your purple assault has collapsed; so "What then is left?"

How I wish I had space to come at you, inch by inch! Disagreeing with you is worthwhile because we have in common a very important issue—to crusade against source-hunters whose sole end is to discover an echo; against the echo-influence-source brand of scholarship that cannot distinguish apple from applesauce; against the never-questioned assumption as to what scholarship is really all about. We agree in our disagreement. Enough!

I am, sir, your most obedient servant,

R. W. STALLMAN

## News and Ideas

NOTHINGNESS AS A DEGENERATE goal of twentieth-century intellectuals and creators is the subject of an article by Charles Glicksberg (Brooklyn) in the Autumn *Arizona Quarterly*. In ironical contrast to this essay, the same issue contains an analysis of the way in which Wallace Stevens' poetry makes nothingness equal to absolute spirit, by Robert Pack, editor of *Discovery* magazine.

KAFKA'S *AMERIKA* AS A "SHEER imitation" (the author's words in his diary) of Dickens' *David Copperfield* is the somewhat surprising topic discussed by E. W. Tedlock (New Mexico) in the Winter 1955 *Comparative Literature*.

THE SPRING COMPARATIVE LITERATURE contained the impressive 1954 MLA Symposium on "Changing Perspectives in Modern Literature," with Claude Vigée (Brandeis) on poetry, Erich Kahler (Cornell) on fiction, John Gassner (Queens; *College English* adviser) on drama, and Harry Levin (Harvard) on fiction.

A FASCINATING DEFENCE OF comic strips and books is offered by Leslie Fiedler (Chairman at Montana) in the August *Encounter* (British). It is not "a defence of what is banal and mechanical and dull . . . in mass culture," but "a counter-attack against those who are aiming through that banality and dullness at what moves all literature of worth."

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY, UNDER the leadership of NCTE persons Dean Thomas Clark Pollock and Department Chairman Oscar Cargill, are conducting this year an experiment in teaching by means of closed-circuit television. Under a grant by the Fund for the Advancement of Education, the experiment follows up those by Johns Hopkins, The Pennsylvania State University, and Stephens College, but is concentrating on composition and literature courses. TV will be the medium for lecture-demonstrations in two of the three weekly course meetings, and a tutorial hour with

fifteen students will occupy the third. According to Dean Pollock, there are three major reasons for the attempt: (1) "It now seems clear . . . that television offers the greatest opportunity for the advancement of education since the introduction of printing by movable type. This comparison is made soberly." (2) "If we continue our present methods of instruction, we simply will not have enough qualified teachers to teach the students" in the future. (3) "We should try as a profession to share more fully in the improved standard of living of the American people by learning to extend our individual effectiveness through technological devices."

THE VIRGINIA QUARTERLY REVIEW will be giving prizes of \$500 for the best short story and two of \$250 each for second place, \$300 for the best poem and \$100 each for second prizes, the work to be published in the magazine, and the prizes to be in addition to regular payment. Poems may be any length, but stories should be in the 3000-7000-word range; anyone may submit as many MSS. as he wishes, by 1 Jan. 1956. The prizes will come from the Emily Clark Balch bequest, and MSS. should be addressed to The Balch Prize Contest, *VQR*, 1 West Range, Charlottesville, Va.

A HELPFUL SURVEY OF THE critics of Eliot's *Waste Land* appears in *English Studies* (Dutch) for February by Armour Nelson of Concordia (Minnesota). There are eighty-one footnotes. Ezra Pound's *Cantos* 88 and 89 appear in the Summer *Hudson Review*—more nineteenth-century American political and economic "history."

MAGAZINE CHANGES. HENRY RAGO succeeds Karl Shapiro as editor of *Poetry* with the October issue. *The Explicator* has a new cover and, in November, a new feature—a monthly review of a recent book of explication.

THE ENGLISH JOURNAL, THE NCTE magazine for high school teachers, contains

a most useful list in the October issue: "Sources of Free and Inexpensive Material for Teachers of English," compiled by John Searles (Wisconsin).

THE THOREAU SOCIETY HAS REPRODUCED AN 1880 "Thoreau Annex" of *The Concord Freeman* containing recollections by Joseph Hosmer, a friend of Henry, and extracts from the letters and works, together with a feature article on the ubiquitous Louisa M. Alcott. Copies of the newspaper can be obtained from Walter Harding, Secretary of the Thoreau Society, 530 Cabell Hall, Charlottesville, Va., at 25 cents.

ANOTHER THOREAU ITEM, AND A much more useful one by nature, is the *Index to Walden* (with notes, map of Concord, and vocabulary of unusual words) prepared by Professor Joseph Jones of Texas. All you have to do is send \$1 to Hemphill's, Austin, Texas, and then number the paragraphs in your copy of *Walden*, to have something needed for a century.

JAMES JOYCE, OFTEN LABELED A naturalist, was only a limited one, says Richard Ellmann, critic of Joyce and Yeats and adviser to *College English*, in the Autumn *Sewanee Review*. Joyce's "verisimilitude is not for the purpose of accurate representation of the scene so much as for the purpose of demonstrating its coincidence with other scenes."

THE FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY number of *The Southwest Review*, especially its history as recounted by Henry Nash Smith, may be an eye-opener to provincials from other parts of the country who have not yet formed the habit of following this periodical's occasionally regional but unprovincial pages.

THE FORDHAM UNIVERSITY QUARTERLY *Thought* has been publishing a series of useful bibliographies on Catholic writers—Mauriac, Hopkins, Greene, Merton, and Auden. The Auden list, compiled by Joseph P. Clancy, presents an amazing number of uncollected critical essays, reviews, and introductions—some 150 items—from which an enterprising editor who could gain the confidence of Auden and his publishers could make a selection that would demonstrate this poet's stature as a critic.

AN INTERN PROGRAM FOR FUTURE teachers is in operation this year and next at Case Institute of Technology, under a grant from the Ford F. A. E. Four scholars are gradually absorbed into professional work, with emphasis on their roles as department members, faculty members, and classroom teachers. Dartmouth College is carrying on a similar program.

VARDIS FISHER, WHO HAS WRITTEN and published seven novels in his "Testament of Man" series, has shifted publishers for novels eight to twelve, to be issued in 1956-1958 by Alan Swallow.

MARTIN STEINMANN, JR. (MINNESOTA), who in the October *College English* scored the Current English Forum, accuses, in the July *Essays in Criticism* (British), Richard Sewall (Yale) of failing to define tragedy in a recent article in that magazine. The editor, F. W. Bateson, who, in the *College English* you are now reading, answers the strictures of R. W. Stallman (Connecticut) published in October, and is in turn answered briefly by Stallman, in his own magazine calls Steinmann's analysis "logic-chopping" and attempts to show why. All clear?

# New Books

## Fiction

### The New Faulkner

WARREN BECK

Those best acquainted with Faulkner will wonder most what to make of his latest book, *Big Woods* (Random House, 212 pp., \$3.95). Its four stories are all familiar: "The Bear" and "The Old People" from *Go Down, Moses*, "A Bear Hunt" from *Collected Stories*, and "Race at Morning" from a recent issue of *The Saturday Evening Post*. Each story, says the note on the jacket's front flap, "is introduced by a prelude," and "the final one is followed by an epilogue." One finds these preludes and this epilogue set in italics on unnumbered pages, untitled, but as one reads, memories resound and recognitions emerge.

The prelude to the first story, it turns out, is from *Requiem for a Nun*, pages 101 to 105 in the section "The Golden Dome," that rhapsodic prose overture to Act Two. The prelude to the second story is adapted, with interpolations, from a related tale, "Red Leaves." The prelude to the third story comes, with interpolations and added matter, from "A Justice." The fourth story is prefaced by excerpts adapted from Faulkner's article on Mississippi, as it appeared in *Holiday* magazine for April 1954. The epilogue to the last story and to the whole book is extracted and sometimes closely, sometimes loosely paraphrased from "Delta Autumn," transposed from third-person to first-person narration.

These italicized preludes and the epilogue are not indicated in the table of contents, nor are their sources in Faulkner's previous writings acknowledged, either within the book or on the jacket. Faulkner critics have a new world all before them in the collation of the related texts. Some conclusions about style might result. But it will be difficult to isolate aesthetic problems concerning a book which will raise doubts as to who was up to what. Although the dedication—taking the form of a "memo . . . from author to editor"—says "We never always saw eye to eye but

we were always looking at the same thing," Faulkner devotees may wonder.

The front flap of the jacket calls the italicized passages "evocations of the scene and mood of the individual tales and profoundly moving and memorable tributes to both hunters and the hunted." This is true enough, but the passages will also evoke recollections of their sources, which will suggest that a fragmented and even denatured Faulkner is being peddled. And to whom for a good? As a come-on this book, so beautifully printed and sentimentally decorated, is scarcely a sound commercial venture, even though some copies may be bought unexamined by the women-folk for Uncle Harry who likes to hunt. Certainly the addict to sports magazines who strays into Faulkner's *Big Woods* expecting an easy vicarious tramp with a gun will find rougher terrain than he's ever tackled and will probably give up and sneak back to camp.

Faulkner's devoted readers, meanwhile, will note with misgivings all that has been omitted. The most conspicuous loss is Section Four of "The Bear," with its troubled gropings into the dark inscrutabilities of ante-bellum Mississippi's slave-exploiting society. The prelude to the second story, while vividly descriptive of a man-hunt, may tax new readers to catch intimations of the central fact that the fugitive Negro is to be a human sacrifice at the burial of the Indian chief he had served. The recasting from "A Justice" for prelude to the third story is limited to a description of moving a wrecked steamboat overland to be the Indian chief's house, and omits the main plot element, the miscegenation which violated a black man's human rights and feelings and produced the half-Indian, half-Negro Sam Fathers, mentor to the boy hunter. The excerpts from the article on Mississippi which preface the fourth story

do not include Faulkner's eloquent denunciation of that aspect of his beloved land which he hates, "the intolerance and injustice." Finally, the book's epilogue, drawn from "Delta Autumn," suggests that simple economic encroachment, the clearing of land for cotton, and plain bad sportsmanship, such as shooting does, are what spoiled the big woods, whereas the unpurgated "Delta Autumn" shows old Ike McCaslin made melancholy by his kinsman Edmonds' refusal to acknowledge the woman he had seduced and his paternity of her child. Indeed, in Faulkner's original version, the final discovery that the light-skinned woman has Negro blood precipitates McCaslin's conviction that "the very people" who ruined the woods "will accomplish their revenge"—presumably by an irrationality and irresponsibility become self-destructive.

Indisputably, Faulkner is as entitled as any other artist to rearrange and reorchestrate his compositions, to paint the same picture several times, with whatever variations he cares to introduce. However, such revisions usually look toward the furthering of basic intentions. The recastings in *Big Woods* seem to move the other way. We scarcely need apprehend as the publishers' next enterprise an *Indifferent Readers' Faulkner Reader*, but this book may prompt unsympathetic critics seriously to accuse Faulkner himself of retreating from and perhaps repudiating a former outlook. While such a notion will be incredible to Faulkner's followers, they may nevertheless regret this collection with preludes and epilogue, to the degree that it seems to water down the work of America's greatest fictionist.

This greatness, it should be remembered, springs from Faulkner's conceptual powers, as artist and, more basically, as a member of society. The massive and ingenious architectonics of his novels rest on an immense comprehension. With both painstaking scrutiny and profound intuition Faulkner

has sensed a mingled people and a prolific land, has grasped a century and a half of tumultuous history and judged with compassion and perspective all the South's sorts and conditions of men. *Big Woods* does display something of this powerful imaginativeness in the descriptive passages drawn from *Requiem for a Nun* and the article on Mississippi, but it is not strongly represented by the other preludes and the epilogue, nor by the third and fourth stories themselves, which are predominantly comic, successfully so, yet without attaining to that tragi-comedy so demonstrative of Faulkner's grasp, as in the concluding section of *The Hamlet*.

Furthermore, Faulkner never has been content merely to describe and narrate; an ardent morality, sometimes becoming even forensic, burns through all his work. This ethic is more than a conventional sportsmanship; the old hunter Isaac McCaslin condemns ruthlessness in root as well as branch, so that he sees the shotgun slaughtering of does as incompatible with democracy, with an equitable economy, with the considerate treatment of women and children, with concern for the Negroes in their anomalous state, and with a natural piety. Uncle Ike, who traveled through a long life with so little material impedimenta, carried his weightily comprehensive code whole and unequivocal into the woods with him. It is more than regrettable to see him whittled down in the epilogue; it is something of a scandal. While the more lenient might consent, regretfully, to the omission of Part Four of "The Bear," any real Faulkner partisan would certainly insist that a collection of the stories laid in the big woods not only admitted but needed the original "Delta Autumn," intact, on its own merits and also to emphasize that Faulkner never writes mere hunting stories. It is not only a question of this man's art but of this man's scope.

### NCTE at MLA on ETV

Attend the Christmas meeting of the College Section, a discussion and demonstration of Educational Television. For details see page xii (in advertising section).

## Poetry

## The New Emily Dickinson

HENRY W. WELLS

With the appearance of *The Poems of Emily Dickinson* (Harvard, 3 vols., 1334 pp., \$25), as edited in the definitive edition by Thomas H. Johnson, there begins a new era in both the appreciation of the poems and in the scholarship concerning them. The editorial problems here are generally recognized as almost unique in literary history. Some ninety-five per cent of the poems exist in manuscripts, with numerous variants, and the rest in transcripts carefully made. The three volumes will be reviewed in many periodicals. But their appearance is more than that of a new book. A major poet emerges in an emphatically new light. The book signalizes a new area for study and delight which invites all readers of the poetry to look backward on what the first half of this century has done in her behalf and forward to what may reasonably be expected for the second half-century. The following remarks are, then, not the review of a book but of a unique situation that is both important and pleasant to contemplate.

The importance of the new perspective on Emily Dickinson will almost certainly be understood better a few years from now than today. In some very real respects the new edition is sobering. At the beginning of this century the rediscovery of this extraordinary poet was sensational. Writers hastened to appear with one or another "revelation," and some ultimate revelation was vaguely awaited. The new edition is, happily, not sensational; in many respects it is quite the opposite. The promise is now not for a sudden revelation—there will be none—but for a long-time growth of understanding, to yield for many years steady harvests of new thought and insight. It is, paradoxically enough, with the conservative aspects of the new situation that comment should begin.

The life, the poems, and the critical problems which they present are distinctly clarified by the new book but are by no means revolutionized. It has long been known that the texts for a large part of her poetry were unsatisfactory. Since she prepared no book

for the press, this condition will in some regards always be true. The public will demand poems for which important readings will always be more or less arbitrary. The new edition does not even in every case pretend to settle the regular library text, since occasionally, on presenting all the variants, it leaves the reader himself to choose between them. In a handful of doubtful cases Mrs. Bingham's arrangements have been so good that it would possibly be unwise to attempt improvement and in one or two cases even the earlier editors showed judgment of this nature. But by and large, the editorial work is now finished. Ground that all readers and critics up to now have trod with a certain embarrassment is at last hard and firm. Hitherto we have read Emily stepping gingerly from page to page; this is no longer to be true. Some too scrupulous souls have expressed fear in treading on this domain at all, so greatly have they distrusted Mrs. Bianchi's edition erroneously called "The Collected Poems." As the facts now show, this fear has been timidity. The change today is not so much in Emily Dickinson as in her readers. Our biography and our books have altered, but at least since the 1920's the essential outlines of the poet have been potentially clear. Now although we do not see a thoroughly new Emily, the portrait, so to speak, ceases to be in mere profile and comes into the round.

It is at least not far from a factual statement to say that there are somewhat less than two hundred new readings of real importance. The departures in the new edition from earlier printed versions come in all, of course, to the thousands, but most of these are distinctly minor in their significance for aesthetic readings of the verse. Perhaps it may be said that half a dozen poems are rescued from mere nonsense. In several cases poems hitherto dismembered as two are for the first time united. Meanings of all degrees of importance are changed; sometimes the most famous poems take on a distinctly new face by the change

of a few words only. Sometimes a comma restores a poem's vital meaning. It is hard to imagine conditions giving more satisfaction to the textual scholar who demands the best reading available. Such are the outstanding facts, to be noted by all serious readers. But when all this is said, the new edition allays some of the more sensational fears regarding the texts published hitherto. The new phase in Emily Dickinson scholarship does not lie chiefly here. The superior facilities enjoyed by Mr. Johnson and his associates have enabled a number of improvements on the work of Mrs. Bingham, but of her competence there remains no doubt and her cooperation with the new edition should be a matter of public gratitude. Mr. Johnson observes that at least the typed copies made by Mrs. Todd, the first editor, are on the whole accurate; the alteration in the texts made for the three small volumes of verse to be published in the last century were done according to plan, to make the poems more acceptable to the conservative taste of the period. In our eyes the alterations must always seem regrettable but the sins were venial, not deadly. Mrs. Bianchi appears as a relatively conscientious editor untrained in the problems of a difficult handwriting. No abyss of editorial dishonor is anywhere revealed in the new edition. Editors did their best; what has for sixty years seemed an editorial tragedy—the separation of the manuscripts into two armed camps and the consequent division and truncation of the texts—is now a thing of the past; the tragedy becomes in retrospect a bitter tragi-comedy.

The complete editing of the poems leads to the conclusion that no revealing scandal or Wordsworthian irony is ever again to lift its head to the amusement of Emily's soul in another world. So far as the biography goes, mystery is now at least in part dispelled by classical form. What has long been assumed is now to be believed with at least modest assurance. The evidence is on the whole against a view that Emily had a multiplicity of lovers. The inference is that a passionate attachment presumably of a strictly psychical nature sprang up at least on her part for the Rev. Charles Wadsworth, that she met him some time before an emotional attachment began, and that this grew to a climax in 1861-1862. Before

these last mentioned years she had been a good poet. From then until her death twenty-five years later she was a great one. And this is all. It is quite clear, too, that she hovered on the verge of emotional collapse during the most crucial year, recovering her balance to a great extent through the writing of her poems. Over half her finished poems were written within approximately five years. Scholarship can, apparently, settle down to a condition of modest conviction, with just enough room for philosophical doubt. And presumably no more lurid conjectures!

Broadly speaking, it has been clear that two factors are represented in her poetry: a romantic personalism and a stoical austerity. The poems still stand along with this interpretation of them. Again a moderate conclusion is to be drawn. As would be supposed, most of the stoical poems, which are the more intellectual, are late works, written after the emotional crisis, while most of the over-feminine poems belong to the first half of her writing career. There must be some surprise that hardly anything to be called juvenilia exists. Poems to some extent vitiated by girlishness and Victorian sentiment are to be found up to the end of her major period of production, say, to 1864. They do not, therefore, belong exclusively to her apprentice years. During her last twenty years she wrote increasingly less and less, but the firmness of her hand, if possible, grew.

By what may best be regarded as accident, the outlines of the poet's development have been of late clearer than we knew. Readers of Emily Dickinson's poems today as a rule first examine the *Collected Poems*, as of Mrs. Bianchi's edition, and, second, *Bolts of Melody*, the collection of several hundred additional poems edited by Mrs. Bingham. The first volume places first the poems collected in the last century by Mrs. Todd. The selection here is strongly on the side of the romantic Emily Dickinson. The readers then proceed to the later sections of Mrs. Bianchi's volume, rich in poems revealing the crisis in the poet's passionate pilgrimage and the years of relatively philosophical calm that followed. Mrs. Bingham's book is especially rich in these later poems. The outlines have been present, had we the courage to trace them; they now stand

forth in a quite remarkable clarity.

One of the most surprising results of the new edition is the brilliant and unexpected vindication of the editorial plan to arrange the poems roughly in chronological order. Very few poems can be dated by the day or month, but through the care that the poet herself took in arranging her packets and the care that all persons possessing them since have taken—and here a special debt of gratitude is owing to Professor and Mrs. Todd—the task has been immensely aided. A most devoted and efficient study of the handwriting has been made not only by Mr. Johnson but by his colleague, Mrs. Theodora Ward, already known as editor of a collection of the poet's letters. This has surprisingly revealed the chief clue to dating, apart from the arrangement by packets. From these circumstances much of the new light shed by the present edition flows. A far simpler and clearer pattern for Emily's spiritual life emerges than we had any right to expect without such evidence as is now available.

We have, then, a poet with almost no juvenilia. A few early poems are undistinguished, but a highly artful hand is evidenced almost from the beginning. By 1861 there emerges a poet with a lyric cry not—all fear of exaggerated comparison notwithstanding—incomparable to Sappho. And by 1865 there begins to emerge the clear portrait of a meditative poet in a general way comparable to Horace or Simonides. The lyric note, though never fading out completely, diminishes and the epigrammatic concision becomes even more miraculous. It is hardly too much to say that hitherto we have had only one Emily Dickinson whereas we are now favored with two. Her biography as it now appears is a chapter in a New Englander's personal Classical Revival, for her spiritual life takes on virtually the clarity of a cameo. As the handwriting of the woman falters, the creative hand of the artist becomes even stronger. The therapy of an artist who possesses as deep a knowledge of the meaning of tragedy as any poet, perhaps, since the illustrious Greeks, shows at the same time mastery of life and of craft. After her turbulent emotions came at length under control, Emily devoted much of her life to learning at one and the same time how to live and how to

die. She did both supremely well; after passing, in Shakespeare's harsh words, through "a hell of time," she attained what she herself termed "Eternity."

By virtue of the new edition, the text, the life, and the art are, then, all equally clarified. But here it is not so much the last word as the first that is said. The poet's stature has gained immensely by this new presentation. On this very account, the life and art will always remain mysterious and hence fields for exploration. The materials are all virtually within the public view, or at least soon will be, with the publication of the letters, to be the sequel of the *Poems*, and conducted on the same lines of critical scholarship. Study must henceforth be chiefly in the realm of interpretation. The historical research is either accomplished or assured.

One of the most important aspects of this new view of Emily Dickinson is, obviously, not the present three handsome volumes, with their various readings and scholarly apparatus, including the invaluable topical index. More is still to come. These books are for the public libraries and shelves of specializing scholars. Every assurance exists that other editions of a more popular kind will soon appear. As already indicated, this does not mean a popular edition reproducing the precise text as now arranged, without the critical apparatus. There are some nice problems of real importance that should be the concern not only of The Harvard Press but of the general reading public. A one-volume edition can certainly be achieved without undue crowding, although at first sight this may not seem to be the case. Emily Dickinson's 1775 poems come to much less space than the collected poems of the chief New England poet to follow her in the historical succession, Edwin Arlington Robinson; yet Robinson's poems are contained in a single volume easily handled. But this does not express the whole problem.

For over sixty years Emily Dickinson has suffered as almost no other poet from inadequate publication. Her works have been scantily published, badly arranged for a major author, and divided between several books, not to mention the important collection of textual corrections published in *The New England Quarterly* in 1947. The texts of Mrs. Bianchi's volume, for a score of

years the only available edition, have left much to be desired. The public has not been encouraged. Anthologists have as a rule selected a few of the more romantic poems, giving a most erroneous impression of her work.

1775 poems is undeniably a large number. However skilfully they are arranged or printed, they appear a bit staggering. The new edition is a model of delightful printing and designing, but it is also monumental; the problem still remains of the following editions and selections. It is to be hoped that the success of the present arrangement, where an approximately chronological order is followed, will be in almost all cases observed. In some respects future editors will do well to show much caution. Readers today are not only less staid than sixty years ago; it is possible that they are even less conservative than six years ago—before, for instance, the appearance of *The Complete Poems of E. E. Cummings*. Emily uses as few commas as possible and many small dashes. On the pages of the new edition this looks surprisingly well. In many respects so thoroughly unique, there seems some reason to preserve much of her unique charm of arrangement.

The present edition gives the history of the text but no explanatory notes to speak of with the individual poems. This reticence is gratifying. It is doubtful that any gain could result from the kind of pedagogical commentary or explanation found in some anthologies. Emily repels pedantry, and of this vice of the mind not a trace is found in Mr. Johnson's edition. So be it always! Let the text be clean and clear, with only the poet's words upon it and the reader's imagination to wrestle with them, as Jacob with the angel. She would certainly have preferred it so.

But what of the omission of certain of the poems in future publications? It is doubtless true that great and genuine interest attaches to almost all she wrote, even, for the scholar, to the most confused pages of her notes—for some scholars to these, perhaps, most of all. But would this most fastidious of writers, to whom every word (she said) had its considered weight, have wished to be represented to a general public by all the 1775 poems? Of course the answer is, no; the difficulty is, simply, who is to say

which are to be omitted and under what considerations? Reasonable criteria, however, should not be hard to find. From one point of view, no two poems are alike. Emily in a sense made new whatever she touched. But it is also undeniable that she touched the same image several times. Some of her pieces are only valentines or are in every sense slight, occasional verses. A few are embarrassing through her occasional sin of affected girlishness. Although some of the finest poems are on rough worksheets, there are several worksheet poems that are clearly inferior or unfinished.

The public would, presumably, be best served by a series of books, of which it will be timely at present to mention only a very few. In addition to the popular edition containing the 1775 poems, approximately with the versions as now supplied by Mr. Johnson, a small edition of pocket-book size resembling such editions as now exist for Whitman and Poe would be highly desirable, containing approximately a thousand poems by this master of epigram. At a later time a similar book of this most personal writer might be produced with only half that number of poems and a fair representation of the letters. Finally, of great value to students of the poetic process itself would be a pamphlet of some thirty or forty of the notable poems having the most important variants, such as: "I taste a liquor never brewed," "Safe in their alabaster chambers," "Lay the laurel on the one," "To the staunch dust," "The Bible is an antique volume," "Further [*sic*] in summer than the birds," "Two butterflies went out at noon," and "The bobolink is gone."

The public has some right to demand such service from its servants, the publishers. Far too long, readers have been deprived of the feast that remained, as it were, in the private kitchens of Mrs. Bianchi and Mrs. Bingham and that required some such overall attention as Mr. Johnson and his assistants have given us. It requires much more. To make up for two-thirds of a century so largely squandered, the present owners of the copyright for the new text will, it is hoped, come as speedily as possible to a solution of this problem. Emily Dickinson is, all her subtlety notwithstanding, a popular poet. Sensitive people, of whom there are more than our cynics suppose, will understand her if her

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The new edition may without exaggeration be described as a triumph, though too long delayed, for American scholarship. It would be memorable were it only for a few of the poems here published for the first time, as numbers 1651, 1669, 1699, and 1701. But it is most of all a challenge alike to its publishers, the critical historians of literature, and the public. Here are the raw materials of which use is to be made. It is assur-

ing to have the poems published with such a full and judicious apparatus. The scholars may now read in comfort, the critics work in confidence—but the general public does not even as yet read freely. It is to be hoped that it may not wait much longer for the rightful dissemination of works of such superlative beauty, a part of the rarest of our cultural heritage. These are the winged seeds that, Blake said, should be scattered throughout our green and pleasant lands.

## Literary History and Criticism

THE ULYSSES THEME: A STUDY IN THE ADAPTABILITY OF A TRADITIONAL HERO, W. B. Stanford (Oxford, imported by Macmillan, 292 pp., \$6). This excellent study of Odysseus is, according to Professor Stanford (Trinity College, Dublin), the only continuous tracing of the hero as he appears in Western literature. In following Homer's fine man (who has certain unheroic qualities) through the debased figure of the classical dramatists, Virgil, Shakespeare, Dante and Tennyson, to the "re-integrated hero" of Joyce and Nikos

Kazantzakis (1938, in difficult modern Greek), the author shows a thoroughness, a judiciousness, and even a lightness (there are only a few words in Greek script) characteristic of the best critical scholarship. Although the last chapter, which should be the strongest, is the weakest, the first six chapters constitute the best explanation of *The Odyssey's* central figure since Denton Snider's. (A passage from this book was quoted in the November issue by permission of The Macmillan Company.)

## Reprints

THE CONFIDENCE MAN: HIS MASQUERADE, Herman Melville, ed. Elizabeth S. Foster (Hendricks, 392 pp., \$4); (Grove, 294 pp., \$1.25, paper). This, the last *novel* Melville wrote, seemed insignificant to his contemporaries. Superficially it is a series of petty swindles by a succession of rogues who appear from nowhere unannounced—

on closer reading, evidently metamorphoses of the primal evil in the world. Miss Foster (of Lawrence) finds the satire to be directed not only at credulity but also at complete pessimism, and to include sharp drives at some of the intellectual and social movements of Melville's day or the day before.

## General

TREASURY OF PHILOSOPHY, ed. Dagobert D. Runes (Philosophical Library, 1280 pp., \$15). A compendium of selections from what looks at first like all the philosophers, from Abelard to Zeno, with headnotes, by the indefatigable Dr. Runes. However, since Aristotle is represented by a few paragraphs from the *Metaphysics*, and Augustine by a few sentences from the *Enchiridion*, and so on, the book must be said to be a *tour de force* after all.

THE UNITED NATIONS AND HOW IT WORKS, David C. Coyle (New American Library, 208 pp., .35, paper). Mr. Coyle, who wrote the sensible and handy primer, *The U. S. Political System and How It Works*, does the same job for the ten-year-old union of sixty sovereign states.

AMERICAN LITERATURE IN PARODY, ed. Robert P. Falk (Twayne, 279 pp., \$3.75). Professor Falk of UCLA has

provided a handy compilation of the well-known and the less well-known parodies of Franklin, Cooper, Longfellow, Emerson, Poe, Whitman, and James, most of which are more satiric than funny. It is curious how the real masters of parody seem to be in the later pages—our contemporaries on our contemporaries: Wolcott Gibbs on Lewis and Marquand, Cornelia Otis Skinner on Hemingway (a masterwork, but where is E. B. White's devastation of *Across the River?*), John Abbot Clark on Fitzgerald and Eliot simultaneously. Doubtless, the book will supply spice to many a future lecture; one could wish that Burges Green's accompanying caricatures could also be utilized on a classroom scale.

**NEW WORLD WRITING: SEVENTH MENTOR SELECTION** (New American Library, 247 pp., .50, paper). The latest volume in a good series of international writing finally gets started half-way through, with Gina Berriault's short story. Two other women, Anne Freemantle and Valerie Worth (a senior at Swarthmore), and one man, Joseph Heller, contribute excellent pieces of fiction. Two good literary articles: Charles Fenton of Yale on writers as professors, and Donald Hall of Harvard on American poets of the past fifteen years. The most appealing items are Dylan Thomas' letters to Oscar Williams, plus Gene Derwood's oil portrait of Thomas (reproduced in full colors). The most amusing selection is the set of "Literary Birds" by William Jay Smith—caricatures and verses of Edith Sitwell, Eliot, Marianne Moore, Millay, and Hemingway, all done on a typewriter.

**THE NAKED TRUTH AND PERSONAL VISION**, Bartlett H. Hayes, Jr.

(Andover, Mass., Phillips Academy, 111 pp., \$3.75). An original kind of picture-book, with commentary by the Director of the Addison Gallery of American Art. The plates are mostly of items in the Gallery, superbly reproduced, and they and the comments follow a pattern that progresses from realism to abstraction. Mr. Hayes's point is that art can never duplicate the original exactly, that "artistic truth is conformity to idea or emotion." He has apparently made his point with Andover students, which is to say the book could be used with college classes in the humanities.

**INTRODUCTION TO PHILOSOPHY**, Max Rosenberg (Philosophical Library, 502 pp., \$6). An attempt to consider the great questions without being "abstruse, difficult, and unnecessarily technical."

**ODDLY ENOUGH**, Paul Jennings (Macmillan, 175 pp., \$3). Allegedly humorous columns from the British newspaper, *The Observer*. Stephen Potter's reputation is still safe.

**HANDBOOK OF PARLIAMENTARY PROCEDURE**, Henry A. Davidson (Ronald, 292 pp., \$3.75). What every college and civic committee member—especially the chairman—needs. Dr. Davidson, a psychiatrist who has acted as parliamentarian to many groups, offers a dynamic conception of procedure (Parliamentary law is *not* natural law, he says), a simplified attack (All a chairman really has to remember is: Reports, Old Business, and New Business), and a supply of helpful footnotes to procedure (How to Handle a Heckler, etc.). A most comprehensive and comprehensible aid to getting things done effectively.

## Types and Historical Anthologies

**MASTERS OF THE MODERN SHORT STORY**, Walter Havighurst (Harcourt, Brace, 2nd ed., 24 stories, 453 pp., \$3; 15 stories, 276 pp., \$1.90, paper). This collection by a well-known writer from Miami University has become well known itself in a decade. "A general introduction and brief biographical headnotes comprise the only apparatus."

**CORIOANUS**, William Shakespeare, ed. B. H. Kembell-Cooper (Oxford, 254 pp., \$1.00). Another handy text in the New Clarendon Shakespeare, edited by British scholars. Good apparatus: Shakespeare and Plutarch, the plot, photographs of Guinness and Quayle, Terry and Irving in the play, both footnotes and endnotes, and a selection of literary criticism.

**ETHICAL THEORIES: A BOOK OF READINGS**, ed. A. I. Melden (Prentice-Hall, 2nd ed., 496 pp., \$5.25). Professor Melden of Washington revises his 1950 text of fifteen classic moralists from Plato to Prichard.

**POETRY FROM LITERATURE FOR OUR TIME**, ed. Harlan O. Waite and Benjamin P. Atkinson (Holt, 206 pp., \$1.85). The poetry section from the revised edition of a good modern anthology.

**PATTERNS FOR LIVING**, ed. Oscar J. Campbell, Justine Van Grundy, and Caroline Shrodes (Macmillan, fourth edition, 975 pp., \$5.25). Readings and questions about the personal and social problems confronted by the college student. Compiled by the famous Columbia scholar and two teachers at San Francisco State.

**OUR LONG HERITAGE: PAGES FROM THE BOOKS OUR FOUNDING FATHERS READ**, ed. Wilson O. Clough (Minnesota, 297 pp., \$4.50). A wonderful idea efficiently carried out, this book could

be used as text or reference in a course of American Studies. The editor, who teaches at Wyoming, has gathered the relevant sources of ideas for the new republic, from Thucydides to Justinian, More to Locke, Grotius to Rousseau, Shaftesbury to Priestley, together with a comprehensive preface, headnotes and footnotes. A stimulating antidote to both cultural chauvinism and academic specialization.

**SELECTION: A READER FOR COLLEGE WRITING**, ed. Walter Havighurst, Robert F. Almy, Gordon D. Wilson, and L. Ruth Middlebrook (Dryden, 740 pp., \$3.75). The latest freshman omnibus, compiled by three gentlemen from Miami University and a lady from N.Y.U. Four sections of selections: autobiography, essays in general knowledge (college, history, science, society, belief, language, literary criticism, and the arts), essays of current opinion, and literature (biography, short stories, four plays, 100 pages of poetry). Exercises, and questions, headnotes but not footnotes, a low price for the size and quality.

## Composition and Communication

**THE WRITER'S RESOURCE BOOK**, ed. John Gerber and Kenneth Houpp (Scott, Foresman, 466 pp., \$3.25). The title suggests a manual for workaday writers containing useful transitional phrases, models of loose and periodic sentences, and other tricks of the writer's trade. And such a book would be useful. The present work, however, proves to be our old friend the college freshman anthology, whose family since the war has increased by geometrical proportion annually. It is divided into three sections, the first a twenty-page essay by the editors intended to guide the bewildered freshman who doesn't know how to get started, the second a small group of selections on language, and the third a rich and diverse collection of essays on twenty questions likely to be assigned as themes. There is no fiction, drama, or poetry. The first of the sections, though brief, provides in my opinion one of the most useful essays of its kind available. The second section is adequate but narrow. The twenty questions

of the third section are well chosen, and for each question the editors have selected four or five essays, not always providing different answers. The last essay on each question is called simply "Student Writing." I presume that real live students were the writers; and if so I can assure Messrs. Gerber and Houpp that they should be the envy of their fellows from coast to coast, or have the editors perhaps edited? Altogether a useful and well-prepared text for first-semester freshmen.

WILLIAM M. MURPHY

UNION COLLEGE

**BETTER LANGUAGE AND THINKING**, Rachel Salisbury (Appleton-Century-Crofts, 525 pp., \$4). The former director of Freshman English at Wisconsin State (Milwaukee) says that the anthology differs from others by emphasizing contemporaneity, non-literary items, liberalism in usage, British as well as American English, semantics, self-motivated assignments, in-

dividualism, and an unusually complete index—to help the student understand changing language, mass media, and the nature of truth vs. propaganda. Presented with a bow to the NCTE's *The English Language Arts*.

AN APPROACH TO COLLEGE READING, Everett L. Jones (Holt, Alternate Ed., 234 pp., \$1.90, paper). Professor Jones, Supervisor of Subject A at UCLA, has edited a book of twenty-five essays on subjects that college students are interested in—not "theories of semantics, philosophy, political economy, or sociology," but sports, dating and marriage ("Marital Vacations Keep Love Alive" from *Coronet*), jobs and careers ("I Found \$5,000,000 in a Push-

cart" from *American*), and education (David Wagoner on teaching poetry, from *Elementary English*). With suggested theme topics, multiple choice quizzes, and vocabulary tests.

EFFECTIVE WRITING, Robert H. Moore (Rinehart, 588 pp., \$4). "Organized on the familiar pattern of the whole composition, the paragraph, the sentence, and the word, it presents rhetorical principles applicable to all types of writing" for freshman courses, by the Chairman of Composition at George Washington. The last two hundred pages constitute a Handbook that "attempts to find a compromise between the liberal and the conservative positions."

## Education and Colleges

THE BASIC COLLEGE OF MICHIGAN STATE, ed. Thomas H. Hamilton and Edward Blackman (Michigan State, 127 pp., \$2.75). The first land-grant college has had a General Education program required of all students since 1944. Here the dean and department heads of the Basic College explain and assess the project after a decade.

A CITY COLLEGE IN ACTION: STRUGGLE AND ACHIEVEMENT AT BROOKLYN COLLEGE, 1930-1955, Thomas E. Coulton (Harper, 233 pp., \$3.50). An account of a large (25,000) "subway college" which has the amazing distinction of being tuition-free and of having "the largest liberal arts enrollment in the nation within the last quarter of a century." By the Dean of Freshmen, a member of the original faculty.

THE PURPOSES OF HIGHER EDUCATION, Huston Smith (Harper, 218 pp.,

\$3.50). Expanded report of an eighteen-month discussion by a Washington University committee of such central topics as "Objectivity vs. Commitment" and "Sacred vs. Secular."

THE EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE, Robert Redfield (Fund for Adult Education, 61 pp.). Four lectures given by a Chicago Professor of Anthropology at the campuses of California in 1954.

FINE'S AMERICAN COLLEGE COUNSELOR AND GUIDE, Benjamin Fine (Prentice-Hall, 413 pp., \$4.95). Everything for the prospective college student and parent—college life, scholarships, admissions, military service, liberal arts colleges, universities, junior colleges, technical schools, professions, and tables of specific colleges—by the popular educational journalist of the *New York Times*.

## Translations

THE TIME OF INDIFFERENCE, Alberto Moravia, trans. Angus Davidson (Signet, 237 pp., .35, paper). The sixth of Moravia's novels published by Signet.

THE AENEID OF VIRGIL, trans. Kevin Guinagh (Rinehart, 351 pp., .75, paper). A new prose translation, with a helpful introduction and apparatus.

THE OWL AND THE NIGHTINGALE, trans. Graydon Eggers (Duke, 62 pp., \$3). A clear and swift version of the medieval classic, and nicely printed, too. With a critical and historical introduction by Paull F. Baum.

I LAUGH THROUGH TEARS: THE BALLADES OF FRANÇOIS VILLON, trans. G. P. Cuttino (Philosophical Library, 65 pp., \$3.50). The translator has "steered clear of the stained glass and the flamboyance of the pseudo-Gothic[s]" renderers of the nineteenth century, and he has been successful. He has also supplied helpful notes.

THE HISTORIES OF GARGANTUA AND PANTAGRUEL, François Rabelais, trans. J. M. Cohen (Penguin, 712 pp., .95, paper). This, the twentieth translation, may be the best for our century, since it is complete, contemporary, and appreciative. Cohen's excellent introduction brings out Rabelais' similarities to Joyce, but emphasizes the fact that "There are really no hidden meanings in Rabelais." Another Penguin classic that should see service in humanities courses.

THE WAY OF LIFE: LAO TZU, trans. R. B. Blakney (New American Library, 134 pp., .35, paper). A new translation, by the President of Olivet College, that clarifies the mysterious words of Taoism. The introduction and the paraphrases or comments on each poem are most helpful.

OVID'S ART OF LOVE, trans. Ronald Seth (London, Neville Spearman, 117 pp., \$2.95). A prose rendering in idiomatic English by the author of a best-selling espionage story.

THE ETHICS OF ARISTOTLE, trans. J. A. K. Thomson (Penguin), 730 pp., .65, paper). The Nichomachean Ethics in the series of translations edited by Rieu.

THE LETTERS OF JACOB BURCKHARDT, sel., ed., trans. Alexander Dru (Pantheon, 243 pp., \$3.75). The varied comments of the historian of the Renaissance on his own century.

EURIPIDES: ALCESTIS, MEDEA, HERACLEIDAE, HIPPOLYTUS, trans. Richmond Lattimore, Rex Warner, Ralph Gladstone, David Greve Chicago, 221 pp., \$3.75). Realistic modern translations of a realistic "modern" writer, "the father of the romantic comedy, the problem play," as Professor Lattimore of Bryn Mawr tags him, the third volume in the Chicago Press's series of the Complete Greek Tragedies. Short introductions, no notes.

ZARINÉ: LES LARMES DE LA DESTINÉE, Ulric Devaré, trans. Berthe Dumas (Philosophical Library, 68 pp., \$2.75). One of those romantic tragedies: "I, Zariné, noblewoman of Rome, living in a realm of decency—mocked and scourged by my own husband, want here to die in a rubble of decay... (*Sobs.*)" etc.

## Recordings

SELECTIONS FROM BEOWULF, John C. Pope; SELECTIONS FROM CHAUCER, Helge Kökeritz (New Haven, Whitlock's, 10-inch LP, \$3.75). The readings illustrate the theories of metre and pronunciation set forth in Yale Professor Pope's *The Rhythm of Beowulf* (1942) and Professor Kökeritz's *A Guide to Chaucer's Pronunciation* (1954). If Chaucer really sounded like Kökeritz—something like the stage Irishman of the nineteenth century—then one prefers to return to Professor Fred Robinson's moving diapason, but if *Beowulf* sounded the way Pope reads it—something

like a voice in the Celtic twilight—then one retracts Leonard Bacon's curse of the flame that spared Cotton Vitellius and prays for more of the poetic renderings limited to seven passages on this record. Pope's interpretative reading of the story of Scyld, of Beowulf's trip to Denmark, the combat, the banquet, Grendel's home, the Sole Survivor's speech, and the conclusion is excellent: it is a unique experience to feel the complex connection between the simple events of the poem and the simple observation "Bealocwealm hafað fela feorhcynna forð onsended!"

## Paper-Covered Reprints

A FAREWELL TO ARMS, Ernest Hemingway (Bantam, 249 pp., .35, paper). This apparently makes a total of nine editions and seventeen printings, but no other has a photo of the grizzled Papa on it.

THE SUN ALSO RISES, Ernest Hemingway (Bantam, 199 pp., .35, paper). Ditto, except that it's for editions and eighteen printings.

THE FAR SHORE, Gordon Webber (Bantam, 148 pp., .25, paper). The 1954 novel of the Normandy invasion, from the point of view of a merchant and gunnery crew.

THE INFORMER, Liam O'Flaherty (Bantam, 221 pp., .35, paper). The exciting novel of Irish Revolution, published in 1925, from which the famous John Ford-Victor McLaglen movie was made.

DON'T TREAD ON ME, Capts. Walter Karig and Horace V. Bird, USN (Bantam, 311 pp., .35, paper). "A Novel of the Historic Exploits, Military and Gallant, of Commodore John Paul Jones, Founder of the U. S. Navy, Ever-Victorious in the American Revolution," says the title-page. First published in 1954, this is by two well-known sea-dogs.

JOSEPH ANDREWS, Henry Fielding (Penguin, 352 pp., .65, paper). With an introduction by P. N. Furbank.

THE PLAYWRIGHT AS THINKER: A STUDY OF DRAMA IN MODERN TIMES, Eric Bentley (Meridian Books, 314 pp., \$1.25, paper). Essays on Shaw, Ibsen, Strindberg, Pirandello, Cocteau, Sartre, and Brecht, reprinted from the 1946 book with some revisions by the foremost academic pundit in the field.

HERE I STAND: A LIFE OF MARTIN LUTHER, Roland H. Bainton (New American Library, 336 pp., .50, paper). Mentor reprint of the 1950 biography by a Yale theologian, with an extensive bibliography and over a hundred woodcuts.

A SHORT HISTORY OF ENGLISH LITERATURE, B. Ifor Evans (Penguin, 236 pp., .65, paper). First published fifteen years ago, this sixth reprinting is one of the best epitomes available.

THE PORTABLE VOLTAIRE, ed. Ben Ray Redman (Viking, 569 pp., \$1.25, paper). In the welcome series of paper-covered, half-priced Portables, this contains *Candide* (Part I), "Zadig," "Micro-megas," "Story of a Good Brahmin," selected letters, and short items.

THE PORTABLE HAWTHORNE, ed. Malcolm Cowley (Viking, 634 pp., \$1.25, paper). *The Scarlet Letter*, selections from the other "romances," a dozen tales, letters, notebooks, and "A Very Short Bibliography." Excellent volume.

THE PORTABLE MARK TWAIN, ed. Bernard De Voto (Viking, 786 pp., \$1.25, paper). *Huckleberry Finn*, *The Mysterious Stranger*, the Civil War memoir, selections from the major works, and letters. Another wonderful book.

THE LIFE OF DAVY CROCKETT, BY HIMSELF (Signet, 261 pp., .35, paper). Or by someone who could make the yarns and the frontier and the Age of Jackson sound authentic.

A CHILD OF THE CENTURY, Ben Hecht (Signet, 608 pp., .75, paper). The autobiography of a colorful man of many talents, to augment one's knowledge of mass media in America in the last forty years. Revealing recollections of Sandburg, Anderson, and the Chicago "Renaissance."

MOHAMMEDANISM: AN HISTORICAL SURVEY, Sir Hamilton A. R. Gibb (New American Library, 159 pp., .35, paper). First published in 1949, this is a brought-up-to-date primer of Islam by an authority, now professor of Arabic at Harvard. Especially handy for those teaching humanities and world literature courses.

## Bibliography and Reference

BOUILLABAISSE FOR BIBLIOPHILES, ed. William Targ (World, 506 pp., \$10.00). Not fish, but duck soup for the book lover is ladled out by Mr. Targ in his guise as literary chef for all those having the price of a substantial meal. Two instances excepted, the dishes have been served on many previous occasions, but the fare remains hearty and filling and will satisfy the keenest of appetites. Readers of the old *Colophon* will recognize the type of material offered and find good cheer therein; a new generation of embryonic collectors will doubtless greet Mr. Targ's anthology with suitable acclaim. For any bookman the appeal will prove to be virtually irresistible, if

the price is not a primary obstacle.

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A CONCORDANCE OF WALT WHITMAN'S LEAVES OF GRASS AND SELECTED PROSE WRITINGS (Fascicle V), Edwin H. Eby (University of Washington, 1954, pp. 769-964, \$4.50, paper; 5 vols., \$22.50; 1 vol. cloth, \$25). The last part of the monumental work begun in 1934 by Professor Eby of Washington is the last two-thirds of selected prose writings—*Democratic Vistas*, *A Backward Glance*, and the 1855, 1872, and 1876 Prefaces.

## Literary Biography

WILLIAM MAKEPEACE THACKERAY: CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE MORNING CHRONICLE, ed. Gordon N. Ray (Illinois, 201 pp., \$3.50). Students of Victoriana will be thoroughly satisfied with Professor Ray's fine compilation of the thirty-one book reviews and essays which were written by Thackeray for publication in London's *Morning Chronicle* from 1844 to 1848. In this edition, Professor Ray, Chairman at Illinois, has provided Thackeray scholars with a valuable supplement to his edition of the letters and his current biography of Thackeray. Thackeray's essays and reviews, written in that curiously lucid prose style which is a distinguishing mark of his fiction, are both informative and entertaining. The reader is struck by the extraordinary breadth of Thackeray's interests, for his essays reveal a sweep of subject matter, ranging from discussions of nineteenth-century American democracy to the gastronomic delights of French cuisine. Specifically, the book has a three-fold value. First, the reader is able to gain considerable knowledge about Thackeray's literary theories and his conception of the novelist as a story-telling historian of men and manners rather than a social and political reformist. Second, the essays and reviews, written with the verve and vivacity of familiar essays, reflect the literary climate of the England

of the 1840's. Finally, Thackeray scholars have evidence in this volume of the period of apprenticeship served by the author of *Vanity Fair*—particularly in the review of Jesse's *Life of George Brummel, Esq.* in which Thackeray, the historian of Georgian England, makes a brilliant trial appearance.

RICHARD K. BARKSDALE

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SWIFT AND CARROLL: A PSYCHOANALYTIC STUDY OF TWO LIVES, Phyllis Greenacre (International Universities, 306 pp., \$5). Dr. Greenacre's examination seems likely to interest many readers even though it "is intended primarily for psychoanalysts and readers already well-oriented in psychoanalytic theory." She selects Swift and Carroll for treatment in the same volume because they have more in common than first appears: Both seem especially fixed in childhood between "the oedipal period and puberty." Both delighted in nonsense words, confusion of the sexes, shifts in body size, confusion of generations, satire, secrecy, and pseudonyms. Dr. Greenacre concludes of Swift that "his sense of reality was in general good" while "Carroll's defenses . . . controlled a disturbance so basic and primitive as to be closer to the psychotic" and his success is "that he furnishes an unconscious outlet through humor for . . .

primary destructive pressures without a provocation to action. Readers are charmed and comforted rather than stimulated by the fantastic adventures which he conjures up."

The final section of the volume is a useful study of the theory of satire and nonsense.

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## Linguistics

AN INTRODUCTION TO DESCRIPTIVE LINGUISTICS, H. A. Gleason, Jr. (Holt, 389 pp., \$5.50); WORKBOOK IN DESCRIPTIVE LINGUISTICS (88 pp., \$2.25). Albert Einstein once wrote that the solitary student finds two subjects especially difficult: quantum mechanics and structural linguistics. Most teachers of English who have attempted to explore the pedagogically productive protocol of recent language studies would agree; they have largely been discouraged by bafflement. The independent student needs both groundwork in newly burgeoning theory and practice in method; he will find these slim texts more up-to-date, more comprehensible and generally more comprehensive than any other pair. Professor Gleason, of the Hartford Seminary Foundation, presents an admirably clear exposition of the Trager-Smith sound system of English, covering both articulatory and acoustic phonetics, although some readers

will wish that his treatments of morphology were as full as those dealing with phonemic interpretation, systems, and pedagogy. Another especially stimulating section sums up linguistic aspects of communication theory, speech variation, writing, and world languages. The Bibliography is short, recent, and candidly annotated. The *Workbook* includes, for English, fifteen pages of exercises in phonemic transcription and a page of morphological problems. Teachers of English deal primarily with syntax and morphology; ideal text material would treat these matters more fully. But no other extant introductory material will help teachers more efficiently—teachers who wish to make precise, technically valid and professionally valuable excursions into matters ranging from drill in remedial spelling to literary meaning.

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